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HISTORY

OF THE

TOWN OF BELFAST.



VIEW OF BELFAST FROM THE LOUGH.

THE
HISTORY
of the
TOWN OF BELFAST,

WITH
An accurate Account

Former & Present State;

To which are added,

A Statistical Survey

OF THE

PARISH OF BELFAST,

and

A DESCRIPTION OF SOME REMARKABLE ANTIQUITIES

IN ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD.



MDCCLXXIII.

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*Gift of
William Endicott, Jr.*

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HISTORY

OF THE

TOWN OF BELFAST.

THE TOWN OF BELFAST is situated in latitude $54^{\circ} 36'$ north, and in longitude $5^{\circ} 54'$ west, from Greenwich. It stands at the southern extremity of Carrickfergus bay, and at the mouth of the river Lagan, being extremely low in situation, but well adapted for all the purposes of trade. A chain of mountains, less than two miles distant towards the north and west, bestows uncommon grandeur and beauty on the general appearance of this town.

Situation.

BELFAST, though at present so conspicuous for commercial and political importance, is generally supposed to be of very modern origin. This is in a great measure correct, for there is not undoubtedly a town in the kingdom which has advanced to eminence with equal rapidity, or which has been so lit-

Of very modern origin.

the distinguished in the ancient history of Ireland, and so much in the modern. The notices which are to be found in the works of the early writers on Irish affairs relative to Belfast are brief and scanty, while the state and occurrences of places, now comparatively inconsiderable, are often accurately and precisely detailed.

Derivation of
the name, &c.

NOTWITHSTANDING these circumstances, there is good reason to believe that a village of some kind has existed here from a very remote period. The Lagan, forming for many miles the boundary between the counties of Down and Antrim, was fordable at this place, which ford, it is probable, formed, at least for a considerable distance, the principal means of communication between the inhabitants of the opposite sides of the river, and was in general use for this purpose before the erection of the long bridge in 1682.

THE utmost obscurity and perplexity, however, attend the derivation of the name. In "A Map of Ireland previous to the thirteenth century," affixed to Seward's Hibernian Gazetteer, it is marked under the name of *Bealafarsad*, which means, according to some, *hurdleford town*, while others have translated it, *the mouth of the pool*. Either of these explanations might receive some corroboration from local facts, but as it is matter of complete hypothesis,

there seems to be ample room for farther speculation. It is much less difficult to form reasonable conjectures on the miserable condition of the place, at the earlier periods of its history, consisting, it is probable, only of the rude dwellings of the ferrymen, or those concerned in the accommodation of the few travellers who might have occasion to visit a wild and unfrequented country. It is possible that such may have been the state of Belfast for many years after the English invasion, or that important event may have even been prior to the first settlement of inhabitants at this spot.

A FEW years after the arrival of the English, Ulster was granted to John De Courcey, on condition of conquering it. With this intention he overran, in 1177, a considerable part of the province, erecting many castles to secure his precarious acquisitions. There is no account that the castle of Belfast was among the number, but it is certain that as the power of the English extended, this place, from the excellence of its situation, between the colony at Carrickfergus and their possessions in the Ards, would soon attract the attention of a resolute enemy, whose inducements to war were urgent, and whose principal safety lay in the possession of fortifications to overpower less experienced but more numerous opponents. The first notice accordingly which is taken of this town, in Irish history, is a

Noticed by
the English at
an early pe-
riod.

conclusive proof of its having been an English settlement, not, probably, established by De Courcey, but by some of the subsequent adventurers. The Irish, irritated by the oppressions of their invaders, and by the contrast between their own situation and that of the Scots, who had lately regained their freedom, offered the most alluring proposals to Edward Bruce, for his assistance in the expulsion of the English. The brother of the Scottish monarch accepted the invitation with alacrity, and landed, with a considerable force, at Larne, in the year 1315. At first, nothing was able to resist his progress, and Belfast is mentioned, by Spenser, as among the "good towns and strong holds" which he destroyed.* Had this place been then in possession of the Irish, it would undoubtedly have escaped the devastation of the Scottish army. Though the enterprise of Bruce proved finally abortive, its consequences were permanent and disastrous. The English power was almost destroyed in Ulster. The Irish clans continued their victorious depredations, and extirpated the colonists, or so far weakened their strength, as to possess, for nearly two centuries, the principal sway in this province. Belfast, thus wasted, returned to its original insignificance, though the castle, if not originally built, was repaired at this juncture by the Irish chiefs. Many curious and important events doubtless took place

Destroyed by
Edw. Bruce.

* Spenser's View of the State of Ireland, p. 27.

here during these two centuries. The dissensions between the houses of York and Lancaster, and the extension of war or conquest in other places, prevented for so long a time any decisive measures on the part of the English to recover their former possessions. Those of that country who remained, either adopted the language and customs of the natives, or ensured their safety by that mark of inferiority and vassalage, the payment of *Black Rent*.

But in the reign of Henry the Seventh, and under the administration of Gerald, Earl of Kildare, the English power becoming again predominant, a re-conquest of the northern stations possessed by the Irish was attempted on several occasions. This was one of the places which required the presence of the lord deputy. In two incursions, therefore, which the Earl of Kildare made into Ulster, he twice destroyed, without much opposition, the castle of Belfast.* Nine years intervened between these expeditions, the first having been in 1503, and the second in 1512. It was repaired by the Irish chiefs in the interval; but after its second demolition, it remained for a number of years in a ruinous and neglected state. Neither party, it is probable, was sufficiently strong to take possession of so important a post. The brief relations of the seizure or destruction of the castle, are the only ma-

Twice destroyed by lord deputy Kildare.

* Con's History of Ireland, p. 202.

terials from which we can infer the history of the town at this early period; and after the abandonment of the fortress in 1512, it is probable that the few rude habitations which surrounded it, experienced a similar fate. In the forty years which succeeded the last expedition of the Earl of Kildare, this place, from its open and exposed situation, must have been very defenceless, and particularly exposed to the inroads of the contending parties. There is reason to think from the following curious notice, that these conjectures are well founded, and that the calamitous effects of this predatory warfare were experienced here in an extraordinary degree. "In 1545, the Earl of Ormond marched with his soldiers from Carrickfergus to Belfast, *which is an arm of the sea, about a quarter of a mile broad, or little less*, and then waded over on foot."* No mention is here made of a town or castle, which might serve for security or refuge, and the sentence, so apparently absurd, seems even to imply their non-existence.

Repaired by
lord deputy
Crofts.

BELFAST, however, was not entirely forgotten; and in consequence of the alarming progress of O'Nial in the north, the lord deputy, Sir James Crofts, made an expedition into Ulster, in the year 1552, when he repaired and garrisoned this castle. The army of Baron Dungannon, which he expected would join him, was attacked and routed by the

* Holinshed's Chronicle.

Irish ; but the garrison which had been left here probably remained secure. The same year, however, the castle of Belfast, among other possessions, was granted to Hugh Mac Neil Oge, who swore allegiance to the English.* This was a mode of conciliation frequently adopted, and though O'Neil might have before held some of his new acquisitions by the uncertain tenure of the sword, he perhaps acted with prudence in submitting to the increasing power of the English. This chieftain did not long remain unmolested in possession of his new dignity. He was slain in 1555, in one of the numerous incursions of the Scots into this province, and his territories were ceded by the lord deputy and council to other branches of the sept of O'Neil. The castle of Belfast, however, was governed, after the discomfiture of its last possessor, by Randolphus Lane, an Englishman, who appears to have possessed only a nominal title, the northern Irish being again so powerful and so turbulent, as to render such a place as Belfast of little real advantage. In the thirteenth year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, this castle, with valuable tracts of land, was granted to Sir Thomas Smith, and Thomas Smith his son, under several very advantageous stipulations, hereafter to be narrated. Owing, however, to the uncertainty which attended possessions in land, and

Granted to
Hugh Mac
Neil Oge.

Governed by
Randolphus
Lane.

Granted to
Sir T. Smith.

* Cox's Ireland, p. 293.

some other mischances, it afterwards appeared that Sir Thomas Smith did not derive much benefit from these grants. During the time that he retained this castle, a skirmish took place here (1575) between the English and the Irish, of which Sir Henry Sidney, the lord deputy, who was concerned in it, makes the following relation to the council:—"In the Confynes of this Countrey (as I take it) I was offered Skirmishe by Mac Neill Brian Ertough, at my Passage over the Water at Belfast ; which I cawsed to be answered, and passed over without Losse of Man or Horsse, yet by Reason of the Tydes extraordinarie Retorne, owre Horsies swamme, and the Footemen in the Passage waded nye depe."

Noticed by Sir
John Perrot.

THE excellent and commodious situation of this town, therefore, more than its size, must have induced Sir John Perrot, in 1582, when offering his advice for the suppression of the perpetual rebellions which had retarded the improvement of Ireland, and for its future well-government, to single out Belfast as the best and most convenient place in Ulster for the establishment of shipwrights. He was likewise influenced in this choice by the extensive forests which grew in the neighbourhood, a circumstance which is sufficiently proved by an order of lord deputy Grey, in 1581, to permit the mayor and inhabitants of Carrickfergus to convey timber from

"the woods of Belfast," for the purpose of finishing their church; and it is remarkable that this order is addressed to the "Lord of the Woods," which was probably an office of considerable importance. The representations or the actions of Sir John Perrot, for promoting the prosperity of the kingdom, at this period, were equally ineffectual, as, in 1596, Belfast was without the English pale. The celebrated Earl of Tyrone was the principal cause of this great defection; and even in 1601, when he was opposed by the intrepid and vigilant Mountjoy, Carrickfergus was the only place, in this neighbourhood, which acknowledged the authority of the English. It is curious to reflect, that a town, which is at present the most important in Ulster, should have been, only two centuries ago, in undisturbed possession of the Irish clans, and that no record or document should exist, to inform us of its size and population at that period, both of which must have, consequently, been extremely inconsiderable.

THE flight of the Earls in 1607, led to the subsequent division and settlement of the kingdom by James I. which were the most efficient steps that had hitherto been taken to restore this country to its true value and importance. In this reign, Sir Thomas Smith was required to fulfil the agreement by which he held the castle of Belfast, but, not making his appearance, his possessions were forfeit-

Granted to Sir
A. Chichester.

ed to the crown. The castle, town, and manor of Belfast, with large estates, were thereupon granted by King James, in 1612, to Sir Arthur Chichester, then lord deputy, with the title of Baron Chichester of Belfast. It is from that time we may date the rise and progress of this place. The town soon becomes more distinguished than the castle, though as yet it had acquired no consequence in the general affairs of the country. It is omitted by Holinshed, in his "Description of Ireland," while places which are now scarcely known, are mentioned as among the chief towns in the kingdom. Belfast is marked, indeed, as an unimportant village, in Speed's maps, in 1610, but no further notice is taken of it by that author.

The town
raised into a
Corporation.

In the year 1613, however, this town was constituted by charter from James I. a corporation, to consist of a sovereign, twelve burgesses, and commonalty. A lord and constable of the castle were also added, the former station to be filled by the Lord Chichester and his heirs. Both these officers were likewise to be burgesses, with privileges similar and equal to the other twelve. The sovereign was empowered to hold a court of record, for the recovery of sums not exceeding twenty pounds, and, with the assistance of the burgesses, to make different salutary laws and regulations for the prosperity of the town. The

commonalty only, as authorized by the sovereign and burgesses, were allowed to dispose of merchandise, either within the town or three miles round it in every direction. It was also permitted by the charter, that a guild of merchants might be embodied, and that the freemen had liberty to erect one wharf, without the interference of the corporation of Carrickfergus. The preamble to this charter expressly states, that the privileges which it sets forth were granted, as well on account of the humble petition of the inhabitants of Belfast, as for the better progress in the plantation of the northern parts of the kingdom, then almost entirely depopulated. One of the most important clauses which it contains was the power thereby vested in the sovereign and burgesses, of sending two representatives to parliament. In pursuance of such authority, Sir John Blennerhasset, Second Baron of the Exchequer, and George Trevillian, Esq. were chosen the same year to serve in parliament for this town. They were, however, shortly after obliged, with the representatives of several other places of little note, to resign their seats, in consequence of the remonstrances of the Roman Catholics, who imagined that their interests might be endangered if so many royal boroughs were suffered to be created.*

Abstract of
the charter.

* See the order to this effect, *Desiderata Curiosa Hibernica*, v. 1, p. 523.

English and
Scotch Pro-
testants intro-
duced.

THOUGH this organization of the inhabitants of Belfast into a corporate body must have stimulated their exertions and accelerated their improvement, the introduction, about the same time, of English and Scotch Protestants, into the north of Ireland, had a more immediate influence. Presbyterianism was first introduced into this kingdom in 1611, the principal part of those who were established in the counties of Down and Antrim being Scottish settlers. Though Belfast probably participated at an early period in some of the advantages attendant on such changes, it is certain that the Presbyterians, owing to the opposition which the episcopal party afterwards raised against them, acquired influence more slowly in towns than in the more open parts of the country. Early in the seventeenth century, however, Belfast was surrounded by Presbyterian settlements; and however useful such establishments were, in a political point of view, they afterwards occasioned the most serious dissensions. The civil history of this town, from its erection into a borough until the year 1641, is totally obscured by ecclesiastical transactions, so that a brief account of them will form a good and necessary prelude to the more important affairs of Belfast, in the latter end of the memorable reign of King Charles the First.

Their charac-
ter and sub-
sequent beha-

THE same independent and inflexible spirit in the demand of their religious rights, which characterized

the Scots in the reign of the unfortunate Charles, also distinguished the Presbyterians of the north of Ireland, and the ministers of this persuasion suffered, for "consciencsake," many unjust and grievous persecutions. On their refusal to subscribe the canons, or to conform with the usages and principles of the established church, many of them were deposed and fled the kingdom. Those who remained, not only ecclesiastics, but laymen, continued to resist with bold intrepidity the arbitrary encroachments of the king and the bishops. But when, on account of an opposition which was no longer tolerable, the covenant was framed and promulgated in Scotland, the principles of that celebrated bond of union soon reached this part of Ireland, and were adopted with the utmost ardour. The violence of persecution, however, had not yet abated, and many of the "notorious non-conformists," as the Presbyterians were then styled, several of them belonging to Belfast, abandoned their property and dwellings for fear of the High Commission, which called upon them to renounce a covenant that was consonant with every principle of their faith and practice.* As a consequence of this, it is scarcely necessary to add, that the majority of the inhabitants of Belfast espoused the sentiments of the popular party in England and Scotland, and, during the continuance of the civil wars, they followed with remarkable uni-

viewer in religious matters.

* Strafford's Letters, v. 2, p. 544.

Declaration of
the Belfast
presbytery
against the
regicides.

formity the different religious maxims, as well as the several political variations of their brethren in the latter kingdom. The most noted and celebrated instance of this was after the execution of the king in 1649, when the members of the presbytery of Belfast were among the first to declare their abhorrence of that measure. They published a declaration to this effect, which was answered by the illustrious Milton, at that time a leader of the English sectarians, whose principles were much dissimilar from those of the enthusiastic covenanters. The declaration of the presbytery is bitter and intolerant. They call themselves "Watchmen in Sion," and after protesting with the utmost vehemence against the execution of the king, they exhort all persons to beware of the religious opinions of the English parliamentarians, lest they believe lies and experience an eternal condemnation. The language of the immortal poet is highly argumentative, but even more scurrilous than that of his antagonists. He calls the covenanters "false prophets," "egregious liars and impostors," "unhallowed priestlings," who mean to stir up the people to rebellion from their "unchristian synagogue at Belfast, in a barbarous nook of Ireland;" he denominates their allegations "impudent falsehoods," charges them, as "blockish presbyters of Clandeboy," with ignorance of history, sacred and profane, and, in a spirit of derision, taking occasion

Milton's answer.

frequently to advert to the small and undistinguished place from which so violent a manifest had issued, infers from their actions that they are a generation of "highland thieves and redshanks." The Belfast Presbyterians, however, not to be daunted by such invectives, immediately published a defence of their former declaration. Persecutions on this account were renewed, but they still adhered, during the entire Protectorate, to the principles of the original covenant, entirely disclaiming the authority of the parliament and sectaries in England.

HOWEVER necessary it may be to understand the foregoing circumstances, it must be considered more interesting to trace the improvements of Belfast, and to detail the share which it took in the civil history of Ireland. In the year 1687, the Earl of Strafford purchased from the corporation of Carrickfergus, their privilege of receiving one third of the duties payable on goods imported into that town, and the other extensive monopolies which it enjoyed. This proved a most fortunate circumstance for Belfast, as great part of the trade of Carrickfergus was quickly transferred to this place, and the consequences of such an event were soon perceivable in its increasing prosperity. But all improvements were for a time unhappily suspend-

First rise of
Belfast as a
commercial
place.

Trade retard-
ed for a time
by rebellion.

ed by the destructive wars in 1641, and the following years. Belfast did not escape the ruinous effects of these tumults and rebellions, though it also served as a place of security to the Protestants of the neighbouring country. Many of the inhabitants of this town, however, fled to Carrickfergus on the news of the insurrection, but the insurgents under Sir Conn Magennis being defeated in their attempts on Lisburn, Belfast was saved from destruction, at which the rebels expressed the most unfeigned disappointment. On the 28th November, however, Lisburn was a second time attacked by the Irish, under Sir Phelim O'Neil, but, after doing considerable mischief, they were again repulsed, and principally deterred from any farther hostilities by a reinforcement which arrived the same night from Belfast. The safety of Lisburn, at least in the first instance, arose from the intrepidity of Captain Lawson, a merchant of Derry, who was travelling when the insurrection commenced. Arriving at Belfast in the latter end of October, 1641, he found the inhabitants flying in the utmost consternation. His endeavours to prevail on them to remain and furnish him with arms were ineffectual, so that he was obliged to rest satisfied with seven muskets, which he took from "Master Lesquire's house," and eight halberds, which he found ready to be sent to Carrickfergus. He procured also a drum, and beating it through the street,

Means by
which Belfast
was saved
from the
rebels.

persuaded about twenty of the townsmen to accompany him to Lisburn, that town also being deserted by its inhabitants. In their way thither, they were joined by some other small companies, and on their arrival, in consequence of the weakness of their force, they adopted the stratagem of showing six or seven matches for every piece of cannon, besides placing many lights in the market-house and other conspicuous parts of the town, by which the rebels were entirely deceived.* The preservation of Belfast, when the principal part of the province was in possession of the Irish, is certainly to be attributed to the failure of their assaults on Lisburn, which is farther confirmed by a letter from Donell O'Cane to Donotho O'Cane, in which the former, in reference to Captain Lawson's successful resistance, says, "and was the first in those parts that opposed our cousin, Sir Con Mac Ginis, of entering Lisnegarvy (Lisburn), when the Lord Conoway, his troop of horse, and all the town's people left it, and the country about, and but for him we had had *Balfust*, and most of those parts in possession." However grateful, therefore, the inhabitants of this town might feel for the bold defence of Lisburn, the malignant fever, which committed such ravages in the north of Ireland at this period, did not leave them much room for rejoicing at their

* See "A True Relation of Several Acts, Passages, &c. done by Captain Robert Lawson, one of the Sheriffs of the City and County of Londonderry, in the great and general Rebellion," &c.

safety, having destroyed in the course of four months nearly five thousand persons in Belfast and Malone.

Measures for
its farther
security.

SIR ARTHUR TYRINGHAM and Colonel Chichester being appointed by the lords justices to the command of the forces in the county of Antrim, immediately stationed a garrison and governor in this town. Early in the year 1642, active measures were taken for its further security. The sovereign was ordered to bring in a list of the men who were to form the train-band, and to have them enrolled as soldiers. It was agreed, at the same time, that, for completing the rampart, all such as had not made up their former rates should forthwith advance the stipulated sums, or be distrained for payment. For the farther encouragement in that matter, Lord Chichester consented to make the draw-bridge and palisadoes, and the inhabitants to give a thousand days work of a man, the soldiers also assisting in so necessary a defence. Assessors were appointed to levy labour, as well as money, within the town and liberties, the inhabitants being obliged to contribute certain regular sums to defray the expenses of fire and candles for the military.* These preparations, however, might have been insufficient for the security of this town, if the treaty between the Scottish parliament and the English house of

* Records of Belfast Corporation.

commons had not, about the same time, been concluded. The Scots, who had acquired a powerful independence, refused, when ordered by Charles, to exert their strength in quelling the Irish insurrection ; but having entered into that alliance, which seemed more agreeable to their interest and religion, stipulated with the parliament to send over ten thousand men for the reduction of the Ulster rebels, In the month of April, 1642, part of these troops arrived at Carrickfergus, under the command of General Robert Monroe. A considerable detachment soon after established themselves in Malone, near Belfast, where they were joined by a strong force under Lord Conway and Colonel Chichester. The two parties at first amicably united their forces against the common enemy ; but the Scots, more solicitous for personal aggrandizement than for the suppression of the rebellion, were dilatory and indecisive in their proceedings, restraining the exertions of the English, who were absolutely forbidden to proceed in their military operations without the consent of the Earl of Leven or General Monroe, both of whom neglected several fair opportunities of putting an end to the rebellion. But the open rupture which took place, the same year, between Charles and his parliament, occasioned a farther separation of interests, extremely prejudicial to the cause in which they were both embarked ; and the two English factions, who had now engaged in

Arrival of the
Scots.

Branches between the English and Scots.

civil war at home, were equally diligent in seeking partizans in this part of Ireland. Great numbers of the people here united with Monroe and the parliament ; while Lord Conway, the Viscount Claneboye, Colonel Chichester, Sir James Montgomery, Sir John Clotworthy and others, influenced by the Earl of Ormond, adhered to the king, and continued to harass the rebels with their forces.

Colonel Chichester appointed governor,

In the following year (1648) Colonel Chichester was appointed, by Charles, governor of Belfast ; and, at the same time, a royal grant of one thousand pounds was made for the better fortifying of the town. Notwithstanding these precautions, the avowed junction of the English parliament with so powerful an ally as Scotland, caused a great disparity between the real strength of the royalists and their enemies. After the final settlement of the compact between the Scottish covenanters and the parliament, an order was issued by the latter, that all who lived under its authority should receive the covenant, promising arrears of pay to the Ulster forces in case of acquiescence ; while a counter-proclamation was sent by the lord lieutenant to the British colonels, encouraging them to disobey a command which must seem so little suited to their inclination and their duty. This was of little service, for though the leading men continued firm in their attachment to the king, they were overawed

by the superior power of the Scots, who, with the great body of the country people, had received the covenant with unbounded fervour and exultation.*

Colonel Chichester, and the soldiers garrisoned in Belfast, were among the number of those who remained faithful to the royal interest. Yet so general

Who with the
garrison re-
jects the cove-
nant.

was the disaffection, that he was reduced, with the three regiments under his command, to the greatest extremities, and solicited the assistance of the lord lieutenant, from whom he received three hundred pounds, for the protection of the town and garrison of Belfast against the covenanters, who, it was apprehended, would soon commence hostilities in support of their principles and opinions.† In this exigency, every requisite measure, which the situation of the garrison would admit was taken for the security of Belfast, and though defended by cannon, it must have appeared obvious that a town surrounded only with an earthen fortification, and protected by a small, dispirited force, could offer but unavailing resistance to a more numerous army, provided with every necessary equipment and animated by religious zeal.

BELFAST, however, was taken on this occasion by treachery and stratagem, and not by force. Near the beginning of the year 1644, General Monroe was invested by the parliament with the command

The town sur-
prised and
taken by the
Scots.

* Carte's Ormond, v. 1, p. 490.

† Ib. p. 493.

of all the forces in Ulster, English as well as Scotch, and those who had not yet received the covenant were required to submit to his authority. The English officers, however, were all disinclined from paying obedience to this order, and resolved to meet at this town for the purpose of deliberating on the steps which should be taken in consequence. Besides Colonel Chichester, the governor, there assembled at Belfast on the evening of the 13th May, Sir James Montgomery, the Lords Montgomery and Blaney, Sir Robert Stewart, Colonel Hill, Major Rawdon, Sir Joseph Jones and Major Gore, who deferred their conference till the following morning. They had not long separated, however, when a soldier belonging to the garrison, who had that day been at Carrickfergus, where Monroe was then stationed, brought intelligence to Colonel Chichester that the Scottish General had directed his troops in that place to be in readiness to march to Belfast at two o'clock on the ensuing morning. Upon this the town was put into a better state of defence, and some horse sent out to learn the position and motions of the covenanters. So little, however, were these scouts to be relied on, that they returned at six o'clock in the morning with advice that the country was clear and no enemies to be seen. Colonel Chichester supposing, on this information, that the alarm was groundless, commanded the ordinary watch to re-

time its duty. An hour, however, had scarcely elapsed when Monroe was discovered within half a mile of the town, advancing with great rapidity towards the north gate, which was opened to him on his approach by the soldiers of the guard, before any attempt could be made by those who were well affected to obstruct his progress. He marched his troops quietly through the town till they reached the mill gate, leading to Lisburn, when he ordered his men, in different divisions, to take possession of the cannon, bulwarks, and guards. All the officers who had collected here for the purpose already mentioned, immediately repaired to Monroe, that they might learn his reason for thus surprising the town. The General replied that as Colonel Chichester had issued a proclamation against the covenant, in which those who had received it were stigmatized as traitors, that as he had also on all occasions discouraged the inhabitants of Belfast and others from entering into that engagement, and had even prohibited some Scottish soldiers from being quartered in this town, he conceived it necessary for his safety to have a garrison here of his own appointment. These were but specious excuses; though without obtaining any further satisfaction, Colonel Chichester's men were ordered to leave the town. The Marquis of Ormond, in a letter to the Secretary of the Council of Kilkenny,

states the force with which Monroe effected his purpose to have consisted of two thousand men, and ascribes the sudden loss of the town to the wants of the common soldiers who were garrisoned in the place.

A SERIOUS war might thus have broken out between the Ulster forces, as Colonel Chichester and Theophilus Jones, governor of Lisburn, exasperated perhaps at the facility with which Monroe had accomplished his enterprise, and at his attempts to overturn their authority, informed Gen. O'Neil of the surrender of Belfast, desiring him at the same time (by virtue of the cessation it is presumed) to supply them with some ammunition, which he willingly granted.* Monroe being disappointed in his expectation of seizing Lisburn, returned to Belfast. His undertaking was approved of by the parliament, who appointed Colonel Hume governor of this town and castle, with a stationary garrison under his command of about four hundred men. For the maintenance of this body the inhabitants were assessed every ten days, each householder being obliged to contribute; as a subsidy, either a shilling or fourteen pounds of meal. These levies, however, were frequently irregular; sometimes more than the usual contract was demanded, and

Colonel Hume
appointed
governor.

* *Deciderata Curiosa Hibernica*, v. 2, p. 498.

General Maxwell's troops also received several of the assessments which were laid on the town. The inhabitants found these imposts so heavy that they petitioned Lord Chichester, in 1645, that he would be pleased to allow, as he had done before, some portion of the rents of the town to support the military.*

THE treaty of cessation, though at this time in force, was but partial in its influence, being entirely disregarded by the parliament, the most powerful of the three factions which disfigured these kingdoms with violent and desolating commotions. The confederate Irish were indignant at the temerity of Monroe in seizing Belfast, and desired the Marquis of Ormond to proclaim the Scots rebels. This, however, might have proved a dangerous procedure; and, as a less hazardous step, the lord lieutenant, by the advice and concurrence of the privy council, despatched letters to the Scottish General, ordering him to surrender the arms, ammunition, and ordnance which were contained in this town, and to withdraw from it with his troops. Monroe, however, paid no attention to this command.†

BUT the two parties in the north, seeing the little progress which was made in the suppression of the rebellion, seemed mutually desirous of a reconciliation,

Partial reconciliation be-

* Corporation Records.

† Carte's Ormond, v. 3, p. 512.

tween the
English and
Scots.

and of acting with concert against the Irish, who still continued to extend their power whether peace or war should be the issue of their negotiations. In Ulster, even the Irish themselves were averse from the cessation, and the English in this province considered it perfectly consistent with justice and their allegiance, to maintain a contest with men who remained open enemies, but whose brethren were at the same time treating with the king for a final pacification. An agreement was therefore made between the English and Scots, the latter consenting that their allies should be constrained to take no oath contrary to the tenor of the Irish laws, till the authority of parliament should terminate their contentions.*

The Scots are
discontented.

THEIR joint forces made some incursions against the enemy, but in the following year (1645,) the Ulster Scots showed manifest symptoms of discontent, arising both from the neglect of the parliament, and the obnoxious principles of Independency, which had begun to be openly declared by many members of that celebrated assembly. They still however continued to keep possession of this town, which, they affirmed, was necessary for the security of their troops as long as they continued in Ulster, and though timely supplies from the parliament allayed their murmurs on one account, the article of

* Carte's Ormond, v. 3, p. 286.

religion, & more insupportable grievance, remained to confirm and widen their enmity. Their dissatisfaction assumed a more unequivocal appearance when commissioners arrived at Belfast, with a view of bringing both the Scots and royalists under the control of the English parliament. As a preliminary step, Monroe was ordered to surrender this town, but he refused, on pretence of waiting for directions from the state of Scotland.* The overtures of the commissioners were received by Monroe and his adherents with the utmost distrust; and the former, observing the Scots much less profuse in their demonstrations of attachment to the parliament, gave directions that some troops should be sent over to enforce their demands.

IN November 1646, pursuant to this order, a considerable body arrived at Dublin, and on the miscarriage of their negotiation with the Marquis of Ormond proceeded to Ulster, where their reception was not more cordial. They were debarred admission either into this town or Carrickfergus, Monroe and the Scots thus plainly evincing a disposition to disconcert the measures of the parliament.† So great a revolution indeed had taken place in their sentiments, that the lord lieutenant, when besieged about the same time in Dublin, solicited, and would have obtained the assistance of the Scots,

The Scots in Belfast turn against the parliament.

* Carte, v. 1, p. 538.

† Ibid, v. 2, p. 59.

had they not been so much weakened by the destructive battle of Benburb. During the year 1647, the motives for disunion daily became more irreconcilable and more numerous, but when England was invaded by the Scots in 1648, in support of royalty, the Ulster forces entered into the same league, and offered the lord lieutenant their assistance, not only against the Irish rebels, but against the independents of this and the neighbouring kingdom. Their hostility being thus no longer concealed, the celebrated Monk, to whom the parliament had committed the care of Ulster, marched with great celerity to Carrickfergus, which he surprised, and having seized Monroe, sent him prisoner to England. A strong detachment then appeared before Belfast, which, offering little or no resistance, was reduced a second time to the subjection of the parliament.* Colonel Maxwell was then appointed governor.†

They are subdued by Gen. Monk, who takes this town.

* Leland's Ireland, v. 3, p. 327.

† The following lines are in the Records of the Corporation, entitled "Verses presented to General Monk," but no farther explanation is given as to the occasion, date, or manner of their presentation. They contain a keen and no very covert attack on the Rump Parliament, and certainly do infinite honour to the poet laureat of the town for smoothness of versification and originality of invention:—

Advants George Monck and Monck St. George shall be
England's Restorer to its Liberty
Scotland's Protector, Ireland's President
Reducing all to affree Parliament
And if thou dost intend the ether thing
Goe on and all shall crye God save y^e King.

R R doth rebellion represent
V By V nought else but villainy is meant
M M murder signifies all men doe know
P P perjures in fashion grow
Thus R and V with M and P
Conjoyn'd make up our miserie.

Such measures, however, were far from subduing the animosity of the royalists and the rigid covenanters, both of whom were equally incensed at the violent death of the king, a catastrophe which took place a few months after the irruption of Colonel Monk into this province. The whole north rose in arms against the English republicans, and clamoured loudly for the renewal of the covenant, one of the principal articles of which the decapitation of the king had violated and broken. Colonel Monk and Sir Charles Coote, the parliamentary commanders in Ulster, absolutely refused to receive it, though the principal part of their officers and soldiers were of contrary sentiments. The parliamentarians, upon this account, were dispossessed of almost every place of strength in this province as quickly as they had acquired them,* and the appearance of affairs here at this crisis was extremely favourable to the new king, who deputed Sir George Monroe, the brother of him who had lately made so distinguished a figure on the same ground, to the command of those who favoured his government in Ulster.† This town also fell into the hands of the royalists in 1649. After burning Lisburn and Antrim, Sir George Monroe surrounded Belfast. Colonel Maxwell, the parliamentary governor, knowing the weakness of the place, sent with all speed to request the immediate assistance of Lord Montgomery, not aware

Retaken by
the royalists.

* Carte, v. 2, p. 76. Leland, v. 3, p. 538. † Carte, p. 69.

that he also had embraced the cause of the king. Montgomery adopted an artifice which probably prevented the destruction of the town. He obeyed the command of the governor, but when his troops had gained admittance, and were disposed in the most proper situations for attack or defence, he showed his commission of General Governor in Ulster from King Charles, and commanded Colonel Maxwell and the garrison to submit. The parliamentarians perceiving their inability to defend the town against enemies within and without, laid down their arms.*

THOUGH the people of the north of Ireland were little disposed to be on friendly terms with the parliamentarians on account of their rejection of the covenant, yet neither were they much inclined, it would seem, to acknowledge the authority of a king, whose principles might lead him to prefer a similar opposition. Roused by the exhortations of their spiritual teachers, they denied his power till he should conform with the doctrines of their inestimable covenant, and even the soldiers who had so lately opposed the republicans, relapsed into the same fickleness and irresolution. They imagined that Lord Montgomery and his party intended to use their endeavours for restoring the king

* This account is taken from a rare controversial tract, entitled "Sample of Jet Black Prelatic Calumny," p. 192.

without any particular reservation for the security and pre-eminence of the covenant. During the desertions and dissensions which took place in consequence of this, the parliamentary leaders were allowed to sustain their authority till reinforcements should arrive from England. This event soon took place. The same year (1649), Oliver Cromwell landed in Ireland, and after the capture of Drogheda, sent Colonel Venables to reduce Belfast and the other towns which continued in opposition to the parliament.

THIS was now the fourth time in the space of six years that Belfast had been besieged, and this was the only occasion on which it offered any material resistance. Colonel Venables sat four days before the town, which then capitulated upon articles.* There is a traditional account that the little mill, in Mill Street, or rather a former building in the same situation, was used by the parliamentarians as an offensive station, and that an engagement took place between the garrison and their assailants at Buller's Field, the former name of the ground on which the streets in the northern end of the town are built, particularly York Street and those immediately adjoining it. Sir George Monroe, a short time after this occurrence, attacked a

Again capitulates to the parliament.

* Carte, v. 2, p. 90.

party of parliamentary horse proceeding from Belfast to Antrim, when was killed, among others, the celebrated Owen O'Connolly, the first discoverer of the Irish rebellion. The power of the royalists however was entirely broken, and the country was soon subjected to the dominion of the English Parliament.

DURING the Commonwealth the opposition of many in this place to the principles and measures of the ruling authorities, remained firm and unabated, though at the Restoration, when the general pardon of King Charles was published here, several persons belonging to the town publicly pleaded the benefit of it.

Actions of the
inhabitants on
the accession
of James II.

AFTER this period no events properly historical appear to have occurred in Belfast for a considerable number of years. This town, however, seems to have acquired early notice and consequence in the important wars which ensued on the accession of King James II. to the throne. When the principles and maxims of that monarch came to be apparent, this corporation, in common with many others, began to entertain the most serious apprehensions of some infringement on those privileges which their charter had procured, and had hitherto continued to protect. The sovereign and burgesses, however, not being disposed to resign their liberties without

a struggle, agreed unanimously to defend their charter by all legal means in whatever court it might be impeached. This determination was observed, law agents having been employed by the corporation in 1687 to substantiate their just and undoubted rights. In the year 1688, however, a new charter was issued by King James, increasing the number of burgesses to thirty-five, nineteen of whom were Roman Catholics, and the remainder Protestants, who never interfered in the business of the town by virtue of their appointment.* The privileges of the corporation were also by the new charter so much farther abridged, as to vest in the chief governor and privy council the power of removing at pleasure a sovereign, burgess, or any other officer. About the same time the number of Roman Catholics, principally military, had begun to increase in the town. They made application to the lord lieutenant that he would be pleased to order the sovereign and burgesses to permit the celebration of mass in the school house or town house, as an old ruinous building hitherto used was not fit for so holy a purpose. The lord lieutenant, however, was informed by the sovereign, that their desire could not be complied with, as the one was the property and free gift of Lord Donegall, and the other the only place reserved for the affairs of the

A new charter issued by the crown.

* Kirkpatrick's Historical Essay, p. 424.

town, the surrender of which might materially affect the general interests of the corporation.

Project to disarm the Catholic soldiers, and its failure.

THE danger which seemed to menace the established laws and religion was thought to be daily augmenting, and the rumour which arose about the latter end of the year 1688, and which was sedulously propagated, of an intended massacre by the Irish Catholics, had the effect of cementing and extending a union among the Protestants for their mutual defence. It farther induced them in January 1689, to enter into a combination for disarming the Catholic regiments stationed in Belfast and some other places, and for taking possession of Carrickfergus. In consequence, however, of the non-performance of the scheme in this town, the whole project produced none of those results which were anticipated, and which its practicability seemed to promise. When those who had undertaken it were met here for the purpose, Sir Wm. Franklin, Mr. Upton, and Mr. Hamilton, repenting of their engagement, refused to advance farther in so perilous an adventure, and by their advice the citizens of the town were also dissuaded from embarking in the business, though some British officers here urged, in the most forcible manner, the certain success and advantages of the intended enterprise. When the abandonment of the plan was finally decided on, Mr. Hamilton was sent to apprise Sir Arthur Raw-

don of the circumstance, whom he met within a few miles of the town, advancing with five hundred men to ensure a prosperous termination of the contrivance, and who, upon the unexpected information which he received, expressed the most marked disapprobation and regret.* In Lissburn the plot succeeded ; but the inhabitants of that town, informed of its failure here, and fearing to be alone implicated in such an affair, returned the arms. According to another account, the enterprise in Belfast was reckoned dangerous and doubtful from the want of timely notice having been given to the inhabitants, so that there was a necessity for giving up or deferring its execution, many persons representing how much this town might suffer if the concerted seizure of Carrickfergus should not take place.†

THOUGH the attempt was therefore unproductive of the expected consequences, the Protestants of the north, apprehensive of the rigorous severity of the Government for engaging in it, entered with more boldness and alacrity into associations for the defence of their religion. A messenger sailed from this town with an address to the Prince of Orange, then in England, declarative of their approbation of his undertaking, and their assistance in the subversion of the existing government in Ireland. At the

* A Faithful History of the Northern Transactions, p. 11.

† Mackenzie's Narrative.

King William
and Queen
Mary pro-
claimed here.

same time the Presbyterians of Ulster sent Mr. Patrick Adair, minister in this town, and the famous Abernethy, to wait upon his Highness, and, before he was proclaimed, congratulate him on his arrival and encourage him to persevere in the great design which he had in hand.* The answer to the Protestant address was received in March 1689, when King William and Queen Mary were proclaimed and acknowledged here with every mark of attachment. In the levies and preparations which succeeded this avowal of the sentiments of the northern Protestants, the merchants of Belfast are mentioned as particularly liberal in their contributions.† But a stratagem for the surprisal of Carrickfergus having entirely failed, and the Protestant party being otherwise weakened, but feeble and unsteady opposition was offered to King James's troops in their march northwards. King William's adherents were dispersed in every direction, many of them seeking temporary security in this town. But a few days, however, after Belfast had evinced its satisfaction in the government of the new candidate for the throne, it also was necessitated to yield to the opposite power.‡ The Irish army took possession of this town, the garrison retiring to Coleraine under the command of Sir Arthur Rawdon. According to some accounts Bel-

The town
taken by
King James's
party.

* Kirkpatrick's Essay, p. 395.† Faithful Account, &c. p. 25.
‡ Mackenzie, p. 15.

fast suffered considerably by plunder on this occasion,* while one of the most celebrated writers on the other side denies the accusation, and appeals to the sovereign and merchants of the town if numerous protections were not issued by King James, and if they did not discover these orders so completely efficacious as to find, on their return, the goods which they had left safe and untouched.†

MANY of the inhabitants having fled to Scotland and various other places, a proclamation was published by the Government, promising to all those who had resided in Belfast for the last twelve months a general amnesty for the crime of high treason, provided they returned within forty days to their dwellings and resumed their several occupations. It also promised, that the possessions of such individuals, of what kind soever, should be restored, and desired all officers, both civil and military, not to molest either the persons or the property of those who claimed the benefit of this pardon.‡ The order was repeated in a letter from the Earl of Melfort to the sovereign of Belfast, in which it is stated, that directions have been given for the subsistence of the garrison without being a burthen to the town, and that his majesty will not confine

King James's
proclamation
to the inhabi-
tants of Bel-
fast.

* Full and Impartial Account of the Most Material Passages in Ireland since December 1688, p. 14.

† Lealie's Answer to King, p. 148.

‡ See the Protection at length in Lealie, p. 37, Appendix.

his mercy to any stated time. But the sanguinary conduct imputed to Marshal Rosen, in which Belfast did not escape, had the effect of alienating the minds of the people, and the Government proceeded to attain not only the principal persons of this town, but of the whole counties of Down and Antrim.

Arrival of
Duke Schom-
berg.

THE obstinate resistance of Derry, and the preparations which were making in England for the defence of this kingdom, kept alive the hopes of those who were indisposed to submit to the power of a Catholic prince. Their wishes were speedily gratified by the arrival of Duke Schomberg, who landed near Bangor on the 13th of August, 1689, with an army of ten thousand men. On the news of this event the Irish evacuated Belfast, when Schomberg sent Colonel Wharton's regiment to take possession of the place for King William. The Duke himself soon came to this town, and after the surrender of Carrickfergus the whole army encamped within about a mile of Belfast.* He was joined here by many persons who were afraid to declare before, and having issued proclamations of protection and encouragement to the different towns, that their former charters or privileges should be confirmed and renewed, many, who had rejected the

* Story's Impartial History, p. 7. Harris's Life of King William, p. 244.

offers of King James, among whom were the Belfast merchants, returned to their habitations. The army then marched southward, and though this town, or the adjacent country, was not the scene of much actual warfare, the great hospital here served for the reception of the numerous sick, who were afflicted with the dreadful disease which so miserably reduced Duke Schomberg's army during his encampment at Dundalk. There died in this hospital in six months 3762 persons, besides the multitudes which perished in the camp and on their way hither. Nor was this distemper confined to the military. "I have sometimes stood upon the street" says Story, alluding to Belfast, "and seen ten or a dozen corps of the towns-people go by in little more than half an hour."*

THE army of King William, however, was still strengthened with new accessions. In March, 1690, four hundred Danes landed at this town from Whitehaven, and the following week all the foot arrived from Chester, with their General the Prince of Wirtemberg. Schomberg came to examine them and was much pleased with their appearance. In April, a regiment of Danish horse and some recruits came to this town, and four days after they were followed by the celebrated Sir Cloudesly Shovel, as

New accessions to the Protestant party.

* Story's Impartial History, p. 50.

Arrival of
King William
in Ireland
and his pro-
ceedings in
this town.

convoy to some vessels which brought necessaries for the troops. On the 6th of June, Duke Schomberg again visited Belfast, to be in readiness to receive King William, who had embarked for Ireland two days before.* His majesty arrived at Carrickfergus on the 14th of June 1690, and proceeded the same day to this town, which was then crowded with soldiers and invalids. Duke Schomberg, and several other officers of rank, met the King about three miles from Belfast, who travelled the remainder of the way in his Grace's carriage. He was received at the entrance of the town by the sovereign, burgesses, and a vast concourse of people, with the loudest acclamations, and was conducted to the castle, where the sovereign, on his knee, humbly offered the rod of authority, which his majesty receiving, immediately returned, desiring him at the same time to rise. The sovereign, again kneeling, presented an address from the corporation, which, after having been read, the King put in his pocket. His majesty seemed, during his stay in this town, to be particularly well pleased with its situation, as well as its inhabitants, and remarked, when within the castle, the door being open to the gardens, that it resembled Whitehall. It should not be omitted, that the sovereign intended to acquaint the King that the corporation had neither lands, tenements, hereditaments, rents, or commons,

* Story, p. 56, 58.

for the support of its dignity, or for the payment of any public taxes or charges which the town might incur, though by its trade it was a place of some importance, paying to the Exchequer, in customs and excise, the sum of twenty thousand pounds annually, and therefore that his majesty would be pleased to grant, out of the estate of those enemies whom he was going to conquer, such a proportion as in his gracious favour he might think fit. The burgesses, however, all refused to coincide in this proposal, thinking it would be ill-timed and indecorous thus to beg of his majesty on his visit, though it was represented to them that such an opportunity might never again occur. They no doubt repented afterwards of their delicacy in this affair, as it was confidently reported by a gentleman of good credit and reputation that when the King was in the west of Ireland this person heard his majesty say that he preferred the north part of the kingdom, especially Belfast and its neighbourhood, and that if the magistrates or inhabitants of that town had asked any favour from him, he would not have hesitated about granting it.*

KING William was attended in this town by many persons of distinction, and the second day after his arrival, an address was presented to him by Doctor Walker in the name of the Episcopal clergy, and

* Corporation Records.

another by three Presbyterian ministers on the part of all those of that denomination in Ulster, both of which were most graciously received. His majesty remained five nights in this town,* and near the time of his departure issued a proclamation from his "Court at Belfast," ordering the army on no account whatever to plunder or despoil the country, but to purchase fairly every article which they might require. The King then marched to Lisburn, where Schomberg kept his head quarters, leaving Belfast to enjoy the benefit of the peace which had thus been restored to this part of his dominions.

A deficiency
in historical
materials at
this period.

This history of Belfast from this important era is more of a pacific nature, presenting indeed for many years little worthy of preservation. But if there be an inadequate stock of materials to gratify an ardent curiosity or to swell our domestic annals, it is not thence to be inferred that the improvement of the town had become less eminent or less auspicious. At the time of the Revolution it is mentioned both by Story and Leslie, as the largest and most considerable place for trade in the north of Ireland. From these and other notices it may be asserted that Belfast soon exchanged a secondary consequence in the wars for a more durable and more valuable precedence in the arts of peace,

* The King lodged in the house of Sir William Franklin, opposite the castle, the Donegall Arms now occupying its site.

so that if the narrative be for a length of time interrupted or barren, the deficiency may be readily supplied. The advancement of trade and population will fully occupy the chasm, and this is certainly the true epoch, while its history is really destitute of memorable incidents, that Belfast first commenced a rapid progress to the rank of one of the chief commercial towns in the British dominions.

There are some circumstances, however, which require not to be entirely passed over. The art of printing was first introduced into this town in 1696, the sovereign himself engaging in that most useful occupation. In 1708, Belfast is represented in a Manuscript Tour, by an anonymous traveller, as a handsome, busy, and populous town, with a great number of new houses and good shops, the inhabitants being also mentioned as principally composed of merchants. Nor did Belfast fail to display about the same time those principles which it had manifested at the accession of King William on the alarms of invasion so prevalent during the reign of Queen Anne. Such a report having been raised in the year 1708, a company, consisting of ninety men, was immediately embodied in this town, but its services were fortunately not required. Shortly after this time, the most injurious aspersions were thrown upon the Presbyterians for their monopoly of trade,

The art of
printing in-
troduced.

A troop raised
to repel the
invasion.

for evading the force of the test act, and several other offences contrary to the established laws.

Aspersions on
the dissenters
of this town
refuted.

THE Presbyterians of Belfast were particularly the subject of these censures. The sovereign of this town was summoned before the House of Commons, charged by Lady Donegall with irregularities in the government of the corporation, by permitting dissenters to continue in office, though not qualified by the test act. After a long and minute examination of the charges preferred against him, the sovereign was acquitted to the satisfaction of the house.* The unjust imputation of a monopoly of trade by the Belfast Presbyterians, was also refuted by a free and unsolicited declaration to the contrary from eighty of the principal inhabitants, and members of the established church.†

* Commons' Journals, v. 8. p. 538.

† The accusations against the loyalty and general conduct of the Presbyterians were likewise repelled with success by Dr. Kirkpatrick, minister of the Second Congregation of Dissenters in Belfast, in a work entitled "An Historical Essay on the Loyalty of Presbyterians." This book was printed here in 1713, and contains an account of the first settlement of the Presbyterians in Ireland, with a diffuse relation and vindication of their subsequent public or political proceedings from that time to the latter end of Queen Anne's reign. The vicar of the parish of Belfast (Dr. Tisdall), appears also to have exercised his pen on the occasion, but with a very different intention. He published a treatise, entitled "A Seasonable Enquiry into that Most Dangerous Political Principle of the Kirk in Power. By W. Tisdall, D. D. Dublin, printed 1713." This was the vicar, who lost in the same year a suit instituted by his predecessor (Mr. Echlin) and continued by himself, against the inhabitants of Belfast, to recover house-money, under the statute, which provides for incumbents of cities or towns corporate in Ireland, on whom there are "small or no tythes or other duties" settled by law, a charge of this kind for their subsistence. It was clearly proved that Belfast did not at all come under the meaning of the act, being a vicarage endowed both with tythes and glebe land.

In the year 1715 the inhabitants of Belfast gave farther proofs of their adherence to the established government by arming, on the news of the Pretender's invasion, an independent company of volunteers, and in 1745, when a similar project was attempted, equal vigilance was displayed.* On this latter occasion a report having been raised that a great body of Highlanders had collected on the coast of Scotland, with the intention of making a descent on the shores of this bay, the principal part of the Belfast volunteers marched to Carrickfergus castle, and continued to do duty there till the alarm had entirely subsided. But these symptoms of attachment to the constituted authorities, were considered by no means incompatible with that spirit of independence which distinguished at this period the inhabitants of the north of Ireland, particularly the town of Belfast, and which has still continued to be their general character. Some of the leading members of the county Antrim Patriot Club, were inhabitants of this town, and many of them, so early as the year 1757, were incorporated into a volunteer company for the defence of their laws and freedom, at that time threatened with an overthrow from the French.

A troop raised
against the
Pretender.

* In 1739, and the following year, in consequence of the great frost, crowds of wretched people from Belfast and other places, assembled on the warrens at Holywood, and pitching tents there, lived on the muscles which happened at the time to have been cast up on the shore in extraordinary quantities.

French
invasion.

THEIR exertions were soon required, the expected invaders with a small squadron landing and taking possession of Carrickfergus in the month of February 1760. Thurot, the chief leader of the expedition, intended to have proceeded first to Belfast, but his opinion was overruled, which was certainly a most injudicious measure, as this town might have been almost taken by surprise, and would have afforded a more abundant plunder, or a richer ransom, than any other place in the north of Ireland, the force of the French, consisting only of eight hundred men, being much too small to have acquired any permanent possession. The day after the surrender of Carrickfergus, the French demanded from the inhabitants of Belfast thirty hogsheads of wine, forty of brandy, sixty barrels of beer, six thousand pounds of bread, and sixty bullocks. The order for this supply was couched in very peremptory terms, and threatened that if it should not be complied with, this town and Carrickfergus would be immediately burned. Two lighters were accordingly loaded with provisions, but owing to the tempestuous state of the weather one of them only sailed the following evening. She was not suffered however to reach her destination, being stopped by a tender in the road. The French, observing this, reiterated their menaces, declaring that if their demands were not instantly fulfilled, they would put the inhabitants of Carrickfergus to the sword, burn the town itself,

and then march to Belfast. Upon this intelligence, eight or ten carts of provisions were sent off to satisfy their present necessities, but only two of them arrived at Carrickfergus, the remainder being seized and detained by a party of armed men near this town, the people openly displaying the greatest unwillingness to yield to the imperative requisitions of the invaders. The lighter, however, which had been before stopped in the lough, was permitted, about the same time, to proceed to Carrickfergus. But the numerous bodies of determined though ill appointed troops, which poured into Belfast from all parts of the country, soon left little apprehensions for its safety. A strong party of these hasty levies stationed themselves within about two miles of Carrickfergus, which probably had the effect of intimidating the enemy, as they departed without molestation, after remaining a week in possession of that place. The number of volunteers who thronged to Belfast for its defence amounted to 5352 men, and the loss which this town sustained in provisions, the payment of militia, and other contingent expenses, was rated at £1365, which, on the petition of the inhabitants, was liquidated by parliament.*

FROM the year 1770 to the period of the legislative union with Great Britain, the remarkable na-

Belfast rises
in political
importance.

* *Bleaker's Public Gazetteer*, 1760. *Commons' Journals*, v. 11, p. 971.

ture of the information for compiling a history of Belfast is only equalled by its copiousness. The desire of scrutinizing into public affairs seems to have gathered strength from the increase of commerce; and in those numerous discussions which the events of Europe or the state of the nation so loudly and so frequently called forth, this town was always the first and the boldest in the declaration of its sentiments. In examining these circumstances, nothing, perhaps, at first sight, will seem more striking than the outward contrariety which appears between the politics of 1770 and the present day. In the former period, the memories of Sidney, of Hampden, and of "the glorious and immortal King William" were conjoined. "The Revolution of 1688," "the First of July 1690," "the Protestant interest all the world over," flowed from the same lips which upheld the rights of the American colonies to unlimited freedom, and the names of some of the greatest democrats that ever flourished to unlimited applause.*

* A riot of considerable extent took place here in 1771, important in itself, but far more extraordinary in its consequences. The particulars will be found in the *Gent. and Lond. Magazine*, and *Freeman's Journal*, 1771. The following is an abridged statement:—The leases of an estate in the county of Antrim, the property of the Marquis of Donegall, having expired, it was proposed that the land should be let only to those who could pay large fines to the landlord and extravagant fees to the agent. The greater part of the tenants, unable to comply with such demands, were deprived of their farms and other persons placed in them. The original occupiers, enraged at this, committed numerous outrages on the cattle and lands of the new tenants, and, entering into a kind of association, assumed the

In the year 1778, when the junction of the French and the States of America took place, it was seriously and justly feared that not only the vessels, but the coasts of this country, would be exposed to the ravages of these powerful enemies. Taking into consideration therefore the defenceless state of their own part of the kingdom, a number of the inhabitants of Belfast embodied themselves into a volunteer company, to repel any attempt which

name of "Hearts of Steel," expressive of their determination to persist in resenting their supposed injuries. One of these insurgents having been taken prisoner on a charge of felony in Belfast, was sent to the barracks for greater security against any attempt to rescue him till his transmission to the county gaol. The discontented peasantry of the neighbourhood, however, armed with various desperate weapons, assembled in thousands to deliver him, and actually succeeded. They burned a house, and would have proceeded much farther had the prisoner not been released. One of their number, however, was killed in forcing his way into the barracks. The effects of this insurrection, which extended to the adjoining counties, were much more important to the interests of the whole province. Many thousands of Protestants, eagerly or rashly imbibing the spirit of dissatisfaction, or being incapable of maintaining themselves in their former station, emigrated to America; and both the respectable authorities already referred to for this article conclude their account of the transaction by remarking, most probably with the greatest truth, that these persons, thus leaving their country under feelings of the deepest resentment, contributed powerfully by their courage and conduct to separate the American colonies from the British crown. These particulars are farther corroborated by the fact that, in 1771, and the two following years, the emigration to America from the north of Ireland was infinitely beyond all former precedent, consisting principally of farmers and manufacturers, who by converting their property into specie, and, of course, withdrawing it from circulation, occasioned at the time uncommon injury to the whole country. It was computed that in five or six years the north of Ireland was exhausted of one fourth of its trading cash, and an equal proportion of its manufacturing people. From Belfast there sailed in the years 1771, 1772 and 1773, thirty ships, burthen 7800 tons; from Londonderry in the same period thirty-six ships, burthen 10,350 tons; and from Newry twenty-two ships, burthen 6,950 tons. From inquiries and investigations, it was calculated that the number of passengers at least equalled the number of tons.

Origin of the
volunteers.

might be made against their lives or property. The same system had been adopted in 1715 and 1745, but the origin of the celebrated volunteers is to be reckoned from this period, and their association to be ascribed to motives of defence from foreign pillage or subjugation. They were farther encouraged in their endeavours by advice which was received the same year from Government of a meditated attack on the northern coasts of the kingdom by three or four privateers, much commending likewise their alacrity and spirit in arming for their own defence. In the following year, (1779) when a descent of the French on the coast of this county was daily anticipated, the volunteers of Belfast consisted of three hundred and forty, formed into three companies, all well armed, and prepared to receive the enemy. The total number in the counties of Down and Antrim amounted at the same time nearly to four thousand men.

It is indispensably necessary that these circumstances should be mentioned, as Belfast was undoubtedly the most celebrated town in Ireland for the extent of the volunteer system. It is generally believed also, that the first company which was formed in the kingdom owed its origin to this town. If such an opinion be not altogether correct, it is certain that Belfast was among the first to form such an association; and though later times have

rendered it somewhat difficult to expatiate on this subject without entering on more discordant topics, a succinct detail of the principal incidents which accompanied the union of the Belfast volunteers may still be divested of all political sentiments.

THE first advantage which was derived from their association was the freedom of trade. The sovereign, burgesses, and principal inhabitants of this town were early in declaring their right to such a privilege, and in their expression of thanks on the repeal of so oppressive and impolitic a restriction. The next era in the history of the Belfast volunteers was the review on the 12th of July 1780, near this town, under the inspection of the Earl of Charlemont. For two days the volunteers of Belfast and the surrounding country gratified the curiosity, and excited the surprise, of a vast concourse of people by the regularity of their manœuvres, as well as the exactness of their appointments in every respect. There was a mock engagement between two parties, each consisting of fourteen hundred men, in presence of an assembled multitude of thirty thousand persons. The movements on both sides, consisting of feigned systems of attack and defence, were conducted with so much skill and precision, the uniformity of dress, the excellence of discipline, the vast importance attached to the whole proceedings, added to the presence and ap-

First effects
of the system.

Review in
1780.

probation of some of the most distinguished characters of the last century, formed a scene which created in the minds of the spectators the most sincere triumph, and which can yet be narrated without any offensive retrospections.* Annual reviews were held between this time and the final suppression of the volunteers. In 1781, the number of troops exceeded those of the preceding year, amounting to more than five thousand men. On this occasion two fictitious combats were fought between supposed parties of foreign invaders and other bodies of the volunteers. One of these was on the coast of Antrim and the other on the opposite shore. The assailants on the Antrim side landed from a number of boats about four miles down the bay, and were encountered immediately on their debarkation. The invaders were at first successful, driving the adverse party from all their positions, eluding their stratagems, and at length making their way to the suburbs of the town near the Poor-House. Here the defensive army had rallied, and in a general engagement routed and dispersed their opponents. Counterfeit shells were discharged; the various evolutions were so ingeniously contrived, and so dexterously executed, that, independently of any other feelings, the highest gratification was afforded

* This review, as well as those which succeeded it, took place in the Falls Meadows. The place was well adapted for the purpose, being extremely level, of considerable extent, and overlooked on both sides by gradually ascending hills.

by so interesting and so novel a spectacle. In 1783 an encamped review took place, which was eclipsed the following year by another, remarkable for the increasing military spirit which characterized the different companies.

THESE reviews, however, were but relaxations from more important concerns. After acquiring the freedom of trade, the next object was to establish the Irish house of commons totally independent of the British parliament. This proposition was also attended with success, the claims of the latter to enact laws for Ireland being renounced in the year 1783. The people were encouraged by these concessions, and numerous meetings were held in this town to congratulate those members of the legislature whose principles accorded with the popular sentiments, and to petition for a more equal representation in the Irish parliament. The proceedings and resolutions of the celebrated Dungannon conventions of 1782, and the succeeding year, were adopted by the inhabitants of this town with the utmost unanimity and concord. In 1784, they farther resolved to give exclusive encouragement to Irish manufacture. This resolution, which was most cordially embraced at a general meeting, is not less patriotic than laudable, and has been often suggested both before and since that period. The sentiments of the volunteers of this town and country in favour of

Next step of
the volun-
teers.

parliamentary reform, continued to be expressed on all suitable opportunities, and every measure followed which could facilitate in the accomplishment of an end which seemed to them so desirable and necessary.

Origin of the
Northern
Whig Club.

THE Northern Whig Club was organized in the year 1790, chiefly with the view of mollifying those virulent and democratic principles which were conceived by its institutors entirely inconsistent with rational and constitutional freedom. The Earl of Charlemont was one of the principal promoters of the association, this town being considered the centre of its operations. The following year (1791) is rendered remarkable by an occurrence which well deserves particular notice. It was the commemoration of the French revolution on the 14th of July. The volunteers and inhabitants formed a procession through the town, bearing portraits of Franklin and Mirabeau, with various mottoes and emblems of a similar kind, displaying, by their words as well as by their actions, the most excessive joy and sympathy at the efforts of the French people. Not contented with these demonstrations, they despatched, with unanimous consent, an address of warm congratulation and encouragement to the National Assembly, expressive of their gratitude and astonishment at the stupendous events which they had begun under so propitious circumstances, and which

Commemora-
tion of the
French re-
volution.

were, in their opinion, drawing to a fortunate conclusion. "It is good for human nature," said they, "that the grass grows where the Bastile stood. We do rejoice at an event which seemed the breaking of a charm that held *universal* France in a Bastile of civil and religious bondage." In another place the following paragraph occurs: "We, too, have a country and we hold it very dear; so dear to us its *interest*, that we wish *all civil and religious intolerance* annihilated in this land; so dear to us its *honour*, that we wish an eternal stop to the traffic of public liberty, which is bought by one and sold to another; so dear to us its *freedom*, that we wish for nothing so much as a *real representative of the national will*, the surest guide and guardian of national happiness."

THIS address, which is written in an extremely nervous style, was answered by the societies of Bourdeaux and Nantz in a tone equally elevated, and what cannot but seem extraordinary, alluding distinctly to the volunteer institutions, as shewing them what armed citizens could perform. After the review in the month of July 1792, the French revolution was again celebrated with similar rejoicings. Numerous flags, with devices and inscriptions, were borne along by the joyous multitude. Of these the most curious perhaps was one which was pre-

pared as an insulting representation of the Dutch, who had also it was alleged engaged in the "wicked conspiracy of tyrants against the liberties of man." The trafficking Hollanders were to be personified by a piece of coarse woollen cloth half hoisted on a pole, which was to have been hooted by the infuriated populace. No man could be found to bear the ignominious burthen, which was inscribed with Goldsmith's celebrated line, "Heavens! how unlike their Belgian sires of old." Another of the flags on this occasion, carried by a number of persons from Carnmoney and Templepatrick, was impressed with the following strange and ominous words, "Our Gallic brother was born July 14, 1789. Alas! we are still in embryo." On the other side, "Superstitious Jealousy, the cause of the Irish Bastile; let us unite and destroy it." The portrait of Dr. Franklin had for its motto, "Where liberty is *there* is my country." The multitude which attended the procession far exceeded, both in number and in vehemence, any former assemblage which had been witnessed in this town. A second declaration was sent to the National Assembly of France; and also an address to the people of Ireland, proclaiming the steadiness and determination of the volunteers, and other inhabitants of Belfast and its vicinity, in the great cause of parliamentary reform, and utterly reprobating the principle that religious opinions should be the means of producing any political in-

equality. It may confidently be affirmed that, except in the country where that amazing event took place, the French revolution has no where been celebrated with more pomp, more pure sincerity, and genuine satisfaction, than in this town. Every subsequent step of the republicans towards the apparent stability of their freedom was hailed with rejoicings and illuminations. The state of politics would seem to have entirely captivated the attention of the people; and the recent occurrences on the continent had, undoubtedly, a very material influence in giving birth to those bold sentiments which were published about this time by the volunteers and the different societies in the town, as well as to those more unhappy measures to which such proceedings ultimately led,

THE most strenuous efforts were made by many in this place to effect a permanent and friendly coalition with the Roman Catholics, that their united endeavours might be directed to the attainment of those alterations in the established government which engrossed so much of their thoughts. So early as the year 1790, advances towards reconciliation had been made, and many petitions were sent from this town to parliament, strongly representing the propriety and policy of Catholic emancipation. Meetings of the volunteers and of the inhabitants were extremely frequent about the same period, all

Petitions for
Catholic
emancipa-
tion.

declaring the danger of the country, and the necessity for active and speedy preparations. Principles of a treasonable tendency are clearly to be traced in some of the documents which issued from the Belfast press, in the latter end of the year 1792, and in the report of the Secret Committee of the House of Lords, for March 1793, a copious account is given of an unusual tumultuary spirit which had been widely diffused in this town and county, kept alive by numerous seditious pamphlets and private military machinations, which could not but cause very great inquietude. Secret societies (of which there were several mentioned as existing in Belfast), instituted for procuring subscriptions or taxes, to be used for purposes concealed from the government, were considered to be quite at variance with the existence of public tranquillity. The same month, therefore, was distinguished by the extinction of the volunteers. A proclamation was issued by the lord lieutenant that no more armed associations should be raised, and that bodies of men should not appear in future either in the town of Belfast or elsewhere in military array. The proclamation states that great quantities of arms and gunpowder had been collected here, that bodies of men were exercised and drilled by night as well by day, and that though their declared object was redress of grievances, their real intentions were of a much more aspiring nature,

Extinction of
the volun-
teers.

being nothing less than to dictate not only to the parliament but to the government itself.

THE system of United Irishmen had for a considerable time been making a rapid progress in this town, notwithstanding the arrests and prohibitions of government, and the inveterate animosity which the soldiers, according to the public prints of the period, took every occasion to display towards its inhabitants. The obnoxious signs of Dumourier, Franklin, and Mirabeau were demolished; and the peace of the town was often disturbed by different military riots. In the latter end of the year 1794, several additional societies of United Irishmen were formed in Belfast.* In the preceding year there were four, nor did they take any precautions to conceal their number. On the removal of Earl Fitzwilliam in March 1795, after his short administration, the 28th of that month was observed by the inhabitants of this town as a day of national calamity, no shops or counting-houses being open. But after this event the societies of United Irishmen increased with alarming rapidity in the counties of Down and Antrim; and on the 10th of May 1795, representatives from seventy-two of these associations met at Belfast, and framed that extensive system of committees which rendered their plan so remarkable and so in-

System of
United Irish-
men.

* Mac Neven's Pieces of Irish History, p. 76.

genious, and which best suited their rising importance.*

Arrests for
high treason,
&c.

THE month of September in the following year (1796), was distinguished by the number of arrests which took place in this town for high treason. On the appearance of the French fleet off Bantry bay in January 1797, the greater part of the inhabitants of Belfast agreed to arm as yeomen in defence of their country, though many refused to co-operate in such proceedings without first obtaining some satisfaction on those political points for which they continued both openly and secretly to contend. Arrests, prosecutions, and seizures of arms proceeded with the utmost vigour. During these disturbances some Orange and Masonic lodges belonging to, or connected with Belfast, took an opportunity of disclaiming all connection with rebellious and traitorous associations, and to publish their determination of upholding the reigning King and constitution.

Martial law
proclaimed.

IN May 1798, martial law was proclaimed in the principal streets of this town, and four companies of yeomanry, which had been formed here, commenced regular duty, the activity of the government and others increasing with the more certain tokens of the approaching insurrection. The brass field-pieces

* Mac Niven's Pieces of Irish History, p. 101.

which had belonged to the volunteers were delivered to General Nugent, except one which was shortly after recovered from the rebels when defeated at Antrim. On intelligence that the insurgents had assembled in great force near Larne, every effort was made by the proper authorities to frustrate their intentions of opening a communication with their disaffected associates in Belfast. Sentinels were placed at the different outlets from the town, with rigid injunctions to permit no persons to pass, except those coming to and from market. A number of the inhabitants were formed at the same time into a supplementary corps of yeomanry. When the rebellion broke out in the county of Down, many persons fled hither for security from different parts of the country ; but several of them, fearing greater danger than the appearance of affairs really warranted, sailed from this port for England or Scotland. While the troops were engaged with the rebels at Ballynahinch on the 12th and 13th of June 1798, the shops in this town were shut, and their occupants commanded to remain quiet in their houses. The cannonading was distinctly heard here during the conflict ; and after the rout of the insurgents in that quarter, the Belfast troop of yeomen cavalry published a declaration of loyalty, many of the inhabitants also who were unable to undergo military service seconding their exertions by liberal pecuniary contributions.

Great numbers of people take refuge in this town.

Great alacrity
on the part of
the yeoman-
ry.

Number of
executions.

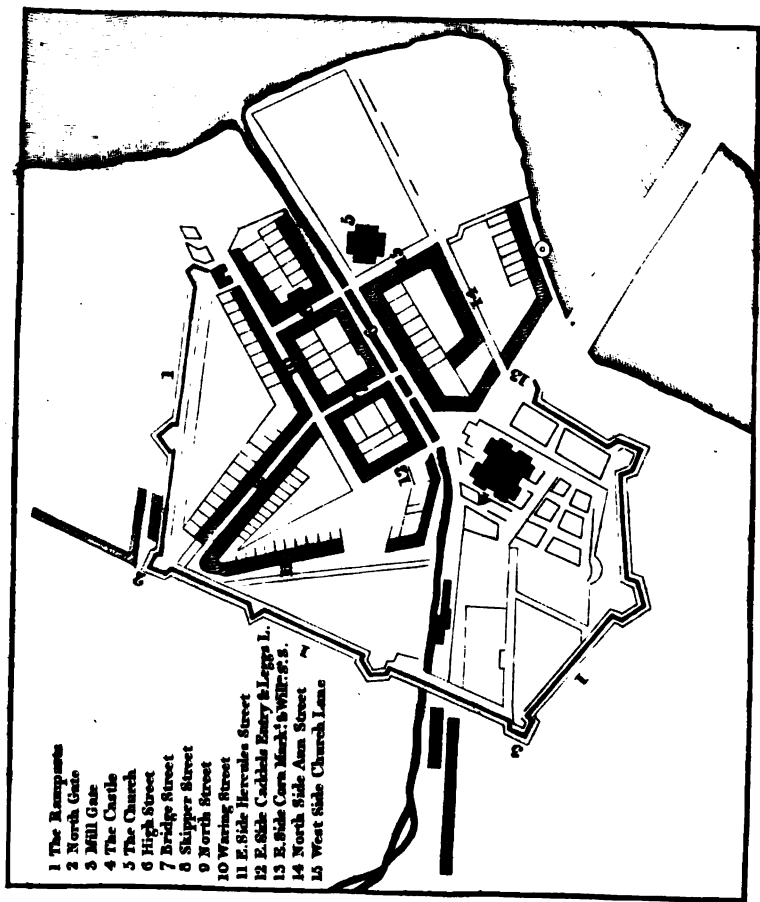
On the landing of the French at Killbala in the month of August, the yeomanry of this town evinced great alacrity and readiness in entering again on permanent duty, the previous dispersion of the rebels in this neighbourhood having allowed them to remit some of their strict discipline. Vast numbers of prisoners continued to be brought in. Most of these were discharged; some sent on board a tender in the lough, which conveyed them to Fort George, in Scotland; but those whose guilt appeared most manifest suffered the punishment of their rebellion. There were seven persons executed in this town. The last execution took place on the 17th of May, 1799, soon after which the court martial was dissolved, and partial tranquillity restored. In the same year (October 7th,) the Marquis Cornwallis arrived in Belfast, and was presented by the sovereign and burgesses with an address in favour of the union, a measure at that time under discussion in parliament, and which had already been approved of in a declaration of fifteen hundred noblemen, gentlemen, and freeholders, belonging to this county. Persons suspected of mal-practices, however, still continued to be arrested even in the year 1800, and the frequent murders which were perpetrated about the same time in different parts of the country afforded melancholy proofs of the evil consequences of precipitate and unsuccessful rebellion. The rash attempt, in 1803, to renew such ca-

lamities, though it is thought to have had some secret abettors in this town, had likewise many firm opposers. At a large meeting of the inhabitants, the greatest detestation was expressed at this interruption to the recovering peace of the kingdom, and two volunteer corps were speedily raised to assist if necessary in its suppression.

THE history of the town since that period is nearly devoid of events which require to be recorded.* This however arises, in some respects, as much from the recentness of their occurrence as from any want of intrinsic importance, to which they will one day seem more entitled than at present. It will be sufficient to observe that the spirit of political opposition which has so long distinguished the town of Belfast, and of which so many examples have been adduced, has by no means evaporated, and that the inhabitants in general appear careful to maintain this character on every occasion which calls for its display. Their opportunities, it is true, are less frequent or less regarded than in the exalted times when all were armed and patriotic volunteers ;

* It may not be unnecessary to observe, that on the 12th of July 1813, a very unfortunate party riot took place here, in which two persons were shot by the Orangemen in North Street, and some others wounded on both sides. The criminals were tried, and punished by imprisonment at the ensuing assizes. Previous to this affair the return of this anniversary had always been marked by very serious disturbances, but no great disorder has since occurred.

but they are still so much valued as to have obtained for Belfast the name of the most independent and public spirited town in the kingdom. The remarkable era of its history however has perhaps passed. There will not be revealed to Irish posterity more curious or more instructive information than will be found in the annals of Belfast for the latter half of the eighteenth century ; and though the experience of two or three hundred years may diminish their novelty, it will but increase the wonder at events which the herald of antiquity must long and faithfully commemorate.



PLAN OF BELFAST IN 1680.

FORMER STATE, &c.

OF THE

TOWN OF BELFAST.

THOUGH the preceding history might be sufficient to throw some light on the early state of this town, it is equally necessary and important to ascertain with more precision its size or population in former times, and to describe its progress from an insignificant and a late origin to its present prosperous situation. From the oldest notice of a decisive kind which can be discovered relative to these particulars, it may justly be inferred, that before the time of its disposal to lord deputy Chichester, the town of Belfast was as limited in magnitude as it was rude in its buildings. But the establishment of an opulent and powerful family concurring with its elevation to municipal authority, the appearance of the town no doubt improved with that of the castle. Till the rebellion of 1641, however, and for a considerable

Formerly
considered a
small garrison
town dependant

dant on
Carrickfer-
gus.

Account of its
size, &c. in
1691.

Gates and
rampart.

time after that period, Belfast was always considered a small garrison town dependant on Carrickfergus, and the earliest plan from which its size can be determined appears to have been taken about 1660, or perhaps some years later. In this map there are only five finished streets, besides several others incomplete. On a first view of it, the town might seem fortified, and surrounded with walls. It has been found, however, that it was never walled, but merely encompassed by a deep ditch and earthen rampart, of the former of which some parts were visible a very few years ago. At the junction of Hercules Street, North Street, and John Street, there was an entrance into the town called the North Gate, a name which was retained till within these forty years. The rampart ran hence in a straight line to Chapel Lane, where stood the only other outlet from the town denominated the Mill Gate, part of the walls and arch of which remained within the memory of many persons now living. From this the rampart proceeded to the north west angle of the White Linen Hall, where there was a regular bastion, thence towards Arthur Street, where a similar outwork was raised, both of which are marked in the annexed plan. Between them the fortification was complete, and continued so until the opening of Donegall Place and erection of the Linen Hall about the year 1784 ; many trees, also, which had been planted on the rampart soon after

the Revolution, and which at this period had attained a great size, sharing the same fate. The intrenchment (secured, however, as appears by the plan, with one additional bulwark) then passed to the sea, terminating near the place which is now called May's Dock, and where the Blackstaff river formerly discharged itself, the present bed of that stream from the Paper Mill to the Lagan being an artificial cut.* In the opposite direction from the North Gate, the rampart ran for a short distance nearly parallel with John Street, but soon deviated from this course to Donegall Street, and Talbot Street, turning finally to the north east near Mary Street, where it again ended in the sea. This is the account which has been received from the old inhabitants of the town, and the slight disagreement which it offers from the plan may be satisfactorily reconciled, by considering that various alterations may have taken place since the time of its original formation. The fosse was deep, and from the vestiges which lately remained, appears to have been fifteen or twenty feet in breadth. The rampart was of great solidity, and faced, agreeably to some accounts, with stone. The gates also were high and strong, and furnished, according to an assessment laid on the town

* This improvement was made about the beginning of the last century by Arthur, third Earl of Donegall, principally with the benevolent intention of affording employment and the means of support to the working classes of the place, afflicted at the time with a great dearth of provisions, which continued for several years.

Extent of the
rampart.

in 1644, with competent draw-bridges and iron works. From a scale attached to this plan the extent of the rampart may be determined. It was 1690 yards, or nearly one mile in circuit. That part of the town next the Lagan, which did not require any artificial defence, comprised in length more than half that distance, making the whole circumference of Belfast in its warlike state upwards of a mile and a half Irish. From the Records, it would appear that the rampart was first constructed as a protection against the Irish in 1641.

Oldest parts
of the town.

We find from this plan that the oldest parts of the town are High Street, which was not then completed ; Bridge Street, east side of Corn Market and William Street South, Skipper Street, Church Lane, and a portion of Waring Street ; one side of Rosemary Street, parts of Hercules Street, Castle Street, Ann Street, Poultry Square, and North Street from the Exchange to John Street. None of these however at present contain the oldest houses, and many of what are at this day the most populous parts of the town were not then in existence. So great and so rapid has been the change, that it might be even impossible to discover the place to which the following presentment of the Grand Jury of the county of Antrim for 1719 refers, a date posterior probably by fifty years to the plan now under consideration. "Wee present that Sam

Smith Marcht. in Belfast shall take in and fill up that wast ground betwixt his Malt-house and Petters-hill rangeing with y^e front ditch of Mr James Arbuckle's fields and houses thereon built and to pave the same in three years it being a precipice and Newsance to trade the Butchers keeping their Bullocks there to the great abuse of the Hids."

THE streets in the old map are divided into tenements, but do not appear to correspond in breadth with their present condition. Skipper Street is represented broader than Bridge Street, and Rosemary Street broader than North Street or Ann Street, the contrary being at present the case in all these instances. This, however, is perhaps an inaccuracy in the plan, as these streets most probably still remain of the same breadth at which they were originally laid down. The stream also which runs through the centre of High Street was at that time uncovered, and continued so till about sixty years since, when there were many old trees growing on its banks. In 1663, it was ordered that every person should build up as much of the river of Belfast as fronted his dwelling, with brick, or stone and lime, such height above the pavement as part of the said river wall is already made. This, however, could not always prevent the inconvenience attending it. By the plan, the rivulet is crossed by five bridges : the first, opposite

Breadth of
the streets in
the old plan.

Five bridges
in High
Street.

Skipper Street ; the second, midway between Skipper Street and Bridge Street ; the third, at the termination of Bridge Street ; the fourth, nearly in front of what is now called Wine Cellar Entry ; and the fifth at Corn Market.

The Castle.

THE most conspicuous public building in this plan is the Castle, the site of which now chiefly consists of a market for fish and vegetables. There is not the least remnant of this building now remaining ; but after having been granted to the Donegall family it became one of their principal places of residence, great pains being taken to improve and beautify it. An English tourist, who travelled through part of Ireland in 1635, calls it "a dainty stately palace, the beauty and glory of the town," and farther describes it as surrounded with fine gardens, and orchards reaching to the lough, or rather to the Lagan, which was not then confined in so narrow a bed as it is at present. These gardens occupied the ground on which the Linen Hall is built, together with Donegall Place, and several of the other streets in that direction. The Castle and its appurtenances were all within the rampart, and enclosed in a second fortification, as it is mentioned by another tourist in 1708, as designed for a place of strength as well as pleasure. In this same year (1708) it was almost entirely destroyed by fire, and has not since been rebuilt. The small part,

however, which escaped the conflagration was afterwards inhabited, and it is only a few years since the remaining walls were removed, when they were found to be eight feet in thickness.

THE old Church is likewise marked in this plan, and placed exactly in the same situation as the present Chapel of Ease. This building, according to tradition, was converted from its sacred use by the parliamentarians in 1649, either into a fortress to command the town or into a magazine for their arms. It has been impossible to discover the time when it was erected. From the testimony of those who recollect this church, it is described as having been nearly square, without any external ornament, and principally built of brick.

The old
Church.

THIS plan, which is to be found in Rapin's History of England, contains one very singular mistake, the placing of a bridge across the Lagan before the present structure was erected. With the exception of this, its bearings in every other respect are nearly correct. It is impossible to account in a satisfactory manner for such an error. There is a tradition that the ford, by which the river was formerly passed, commenced near the end of Waring Street; while this bridge is placed in a direction very far distant from this and even opposite to

The bridge.

it. There is no positive account to warrant the belief that any former building of this kind existed here, except a tradition that the Lagan was at one time crossed by a temporary causeway of stones, which was, however, by no means worthy of the name of a bridge. It is still more remarkable, however, that in a different edition of Rapin's History, the error is repeated, and instead of the straight line across the river which the former draught exhibits, the bridge appears complete, the arches regular and finished. This latter plan has probably been taken near the time of the Revolution, though the superficial appearance of each is nearly similar. There is in it, however, another street or lane leading from North Street, with the addition of several roads or cross ways, both within and without the rampart. The river also which flows through High Street was furnished at this time with six bridges.

Very poor
houses in
Belfast till
within these
last sixty
years.

TILL within the last sixty years the houses in this town were of a very mean description. There is a certain account that in 1720 all the houses in Bridge-Street were thatched with straw, and they probably remained so till a much later period. So early as the year 1638, it is recorded that malt kilns in the body of the town were so dangerous that they might occasion its entire destruction by fire, a truth which daily accidents had rendered sufficiently convincing.

From this information it is almost reasonable to infer, that wood has been the principal material with which all the buildings at that time were constructed. In 1667, it having been found that the town had suffered much by fire from the universal use of wooden chimnies, it was ordered by the corporation that all such should be taken down. It appears also, that in 1686, the inhabitants were obliged to furnish, among other articles to prevent flames from spreading, two poles with hooks and chains for the purpose of pulling down houses on such emergencies.

The former state of the town is farther denoted by many curious but detached regulations in the Records of the corporation. In 1660, it being considered perhaps derogatory to the honour of the borough, the sovereign of Belfast was prohibited from selling by retail any ale, wine, or aqua vitae. In 1665, it was ordered that no inn keeper, ale seller, or victualler, should suffer any person, unless a lodger, to drink or play at any game whatsoever after the hour of nine at night. The year 1676 furnishes us with a more striking and arbitrary law, when it was decreed that no stranger or alien should put to sale, either in public or private, any bread except on the market day, and then only from nine o'clock in the morning till three in the afternoon. A notable edict also occurs in

Curious notions from the Records of the Corporation.

1674. Complaints having been made that the country people stuffed out their sacks with long turf, so that they did not contain the proper quantity, it was ordered by the corporation that each sack should hold the Bourdeaux hogshead measure of seventy gallons, or be forfeited to the poor of the town ; and to prevent the possibility of fraud on the pretext of ignorance, it was at the same time enacted, that four hogsheads of full Bourdeaux gauge should be lodged in different parts of the town, and discreet persons appointed to see the law put in force. A more tragical business was discussed in the year 1678. It having been represented that the " mastive dogs" belonging to the butchers and tanners had attacked and killed cows, horses, as well as other cattle, in the streets and fields ; that they were also so outrageous as to have seized both men and boys, tearing them, and devouring their flesh, whereby the whole town was put into imminent danger and confusion, an order was issued by the corporation that all such, if not sufficiently muzzled, or otherwise secured, be destroyed, and their owners fined and imprisoned. In 1681, from the remonstrances of the inhabitants concerning the unfairness of granting to the sovereign as had been agreed to, in 1667, the amount of some petty exactions which it had been customary to levy, a resolution was made that the law for that purpose should be rescinded, and the funds so raised applied

to the general advantage of the corporation, though with this proviso, that some portion might still be allowed to the sovereign on fit occasions towards "his hospitallitie and house keeping." By an act of assembly dated 1667, the free butchers of the town were commanded to deliver to the sovereign, "on account of ancient custome," the tongues of all cattle killed within the borough, and those who were not members of the corporation four pence in money as an equivalent for each tongue; a fine to be exacted for non-compliance. In 1685, a still more singular toll was paid; two turf out of every sack which came to market. In 1704, at the Ballymena Quarter Sessions, it was ordered that all mutton exposed for sale in Belfast be taken up, if the skin be not attached, with the proper marks for inspection.

It is entirely applicable to the present subject, and extremely curious in itself, to collect any facts relative to the wages which were paid to workmen for their labour, and the prices of commodities, in remote times. The earliest information which has been procured respecting the former is from the old Grand Jury Book of the county, and the presentment on this subject, which was made in the year 1712, has at least as direct an allusion to Belfast as to any other place. It is to the following effect: "Whereas by experience it is found,

Account of
workmen's
wages in
early times.

that the blessing of plenty doth in this County Occasion Idleness and much raise y^e demands and wages of workmen and Labourers to Extravagancy ; therefore in Consideration of the present Scarcity of money, we Doe present the severall justices of the following rates for treadsmen and Labourers, to be sufficient for their severall days work, untill Mich^x next, viz. to Carpenters, Bricklayers, measons, Plaisterers, and Slaters, haveing their meat nine pence every day, or one Shill without, att the Election of the Employers ; to every day Labourer 3^d, haveing their meat, and 5^d without, att the choice affores^d ; to Taylors with meat 4^d, and to Gleazers 6^d, with meat, and to Shoemakers with meat 4^d."

Prices of
goods in
Belfast in
1698 and 1752.

THE prices of goods have experienced an equal augmentation. In 1698, beef was sold at fourteen shillings per barrel, rather a dubious mode of reckoning. From the value of some other articles at the same period, it does not appear that any great increase took place from 1698 to 1752, when we have a regular list of the current rates of different commodities, in some few instances bearing nearly the same prices as at present, but more frequently a half, a third, or even a fourth, less. Shrub and brandy were each six shillings per gallon ; rum and gin, four shillings and six pence ; whiskey, three shillings. Butter was twenty seven shillings ; English cheese, thirty shillings ; salt, two shillings and

two pence ; wheat, seven shillings ; English barley four shillings ; and Irish, three shillings per cwt. Scotch coals also are rated in 1752 at fourteen shillings per ton, English only at thirteen, and rough tallow at three shillings per stone.

ONE of the most necessary facts which can be introduced, in explaining the ancient state of Belfast, is to shew the importance which was once attached to the decrees of the corporation, as well as the ceremony which accompanied all their proceedings and deliberations. The sovereign and burgesses assembled regularly with due dignity in the tholsel, or town house, to make laws for the government of the borough. The commonalty were represented by a jury ; the freemen were possessed of various privileges, and divided into bodies according to their respective trades. Fees were paid for admission to the freedom of the town, and the most submissive obedience required to the commands or regulations of the assembly. As illustrative of their authority, there is a notice in 1660, that every free burgess, and free commoner, should, " for the credit, and grace of the corporation," be ready under a heavy penalty to accompany the sovereign either on horse or foot, to meet and attend any nobleman, judge of assize, or other stated person. In 1673, a petition of the free taylors to the sovereign and burgesses, represents, that the petitioners contribute

Great importance formerly attached to the meetings and decrees of the Corporation.

their share of taxes and other dues to the advantage of the town, yet, notwithstanding the good and wholesome laws now established by the common council for the encouragement of freemen, "a numerous sort of idyll vagabond taylors daily resort hither, reapeing the Benefitte of the said Towne out of your Pettitioners mouthes, not soe much as paying one farthing to any public charge." The interlopers, upon this, were ordered to withdraw. Great importance also was formerly observed in the creation of freemen, and the freedom of the borough as a mark of respect was often presented to individuals of distinguished rank. There are probably inhabitants still living who have been admitted to these privileges. Every custom of the kind however is now extinct and unknown. There is no town house at present in Belfast; there are no freemen or guilds of trades. The Lord of the Castle is merely a nominal title, and the office of Constable, as far at least as to any duty which it imposes, has also long been obsolete. Neither is there any more than external formality in the election of burgeses or members of parliament, there being at present among the former two vacancies, besides the non-residence of several others who are in no manner connected with the general business and welfare of the town.

No freemen
or guilds
of trades at
present.



It appears from the Records, that sessions were formerly held in Belfast; and that about the year 1640, the assizes for the county of Antrim were also established here for a short time.

Sessions and
assizes for-
merly held
here.

As connected with the early state of this town, an account must be given of the tokens formerly issued by persons in trade, and which were for a considerable length of time the only small money in circulation both in Great Britain and Ireland. The oldest which belongs to Belfast, was struck in 1637, by George Martin.* A more general coinage however took place in the time of the Commonwealth by George Macartney, John Steward, Alexander Sinklar, William Moore, and several others. They are all dated 1656-7, marked with the initials of the issuer, and have most frequently, for a device, a ship or bell. These tokens are all executed with great skill and neatness,† except that of

Tokens is-
sued by per-
sons in trade
in Belfast.

* This coin is exactly represented in the plate, and though in excellent preservation, it is impossible to ascertain whether the date be 1637, or 1657. As no other tokens appear to have been struck at the former period, and as great numbers were issued at the latter, the date fixed on above may be a mistake. It is equally probable, however, that 1637 may be correct, Martin having been admitted a free stapler of the corporation that year. He was, perhaps, the same person who was sovereign in 1649, when Cromwell's troops entered the town. Having refused, on this occasion, to billet the soldiers, alleging that it was contrary to his oath, his property was given up to plunder.

† They are very different in this respect from some struck in the neighbouring towns, particularly one of 1656, belonging to Lisnegarvie, or Lisburn, which is of the most rude and clumsy execution that can be well imagined.

L

John Bush, which is extremely rude and struck on a French coin of **Louis XIII.**

THERE appear to have been none made from this time until 1670, when a great number were coined. They bear, on one side, the name and arms of the owner; on the other, his crest or initials, with ^D**I**, for one penny. Many similar tokens were issued about the same time from other places, as Carrickfergus, Antrim, Lisburn, Glenarm, Broughshane, and even Holywood. Several of these are impressed with a large figure 4, to signify, it has been thought, that the coiner dealt in commodities from the four quarters of the globe.*

On the rejection of **Wood's** famous copper money, many persons in the north of Ireland, about the year 1735, resumed the plan of coining tokens. Several were struck in **Belfast** at this time, of which there are specimens in the annexed plate. They differ, both in size and shape, from the old tokens, being considerably larger, and passing, with the exception of one, for two pence. They have on one side, "I promise to pay the Bearer Two pence;" then the coiner's name, after which follows, "**Belfast 1735.**" The reverse presents a device, with some appropriate inscription; as a dove flying with

* It will be observed by the plate, that the only **Belfast** token marked in this manner is that of **George Martin.**

an olive branch, and the motto, "good tidings." On another, the words "hold fast," surmounted by a grim, lion-like visage, fully as expressive as the motto itself. There have been several other pieces of this description circulated here in 1735, and though halfpence were shortly after coined by George II. these tokens must have continued long in use, as many old persons yet recollect them passing, though with most people the remembrance is only preserved in that common phrase, "not worth a two penny ticket,"

THERE are materials by which this subject might be extended to a much greater length, but however curious they might appear to the inhabitants of the town, they are too strictly local to be generally interesting. It may, indeed, be said, that no information which relates to so great and important a place as Belfast should be considered altogether unworthy of notice, but it is presumed, that the space which might have been allotted to this part of the work, will be much more profitably occupied in illustrating the present state of the town, and in detailing the history and progress of its different establishments, than by giving minute accounts of the revolutions in property, or the rise and downfall of families.

PRESENT STATE, &c.
OF THE
TOWN OF BELFAST.

**Belfast at
present the
third town in
Ireland.**

THE town of Belfast at present must certainly rank the third in Ireland, for the extent of its commerce and manufactures, as well as for the wealth of its inhabitants. It might in several respects hold a still higher place. Great part of the productions of the neighbouring counties is here consumed or shipped, this town being considered the chief emporium of the north of Ireland for every article, either of foreign or domestic produce, and in some branches of manufacture it is superior both to Cork and the metropolis.

**Its general
appearance,
&c.**

BELFAST is generally described as being a very handsome town. The houses, however, are extremely irregular in their height, which may relieve in some cases the unpleasing effects of too great

uniformity, but which more frequently creates a crowded and disagreeable appearance. They are all built of brick, and though there are still a few thatched houses in some of the older parts of the town, their number is gradually diminishing. The public buildings, though as yet not very numerous or superb, have considerably increased within these few years. All the streets are furnished with footways, and though most of them are sufficiently spacious, there are several of the first importance dangerously narrow. Their number in the year 1808, was one hundred and fourteen; at present, reckoning streets, lanes, squares, entries, courts, and quays, they amount to one hundred and fifty. High Street is the oldest, and though less populous than some of the others, must be considered, from its greater breadth, and its contiguity to the quays, as well as from the fine shops with which it is entirely filled, the most important and attractive. It is yet only a very few years since the pedlars assembled here to sell their wares, as they do at present in the street of many a country town. From the lowness of its situation, a distant view of this town, though extensive, is indistinct and gloomy: so that it gains considerably on a near approach. The streets are clean, the houses in many cases very fine, and its entire appearance indicating great bustle and activity.

Progress of
population.

THE progress of population has been extremely rapid. There is no very early account preserved of the number of inhabitants in this town ; but so lately as the year 1757, it contained only 1779 houses, and 8549 people. In 1782, these had increased to 2026 houses, and 18,105 persons. For the nine years which succeeded that time, the increase continued to be equally rapid, as the population had risen in 1791, to 18,320. In 1816, the town contained 5,578 houses, and 30,720 inhabitants. In all these statements it is to be understood, that Ballymacarrett, a populous and extensive suburb, though it must strictly be considered a part of Belfast, being only separated from the rest of the town by the Lagan river, is not included, being in a different parish and county. *

THE striking increase, in size and population, which the preceding statement presents, may be fully corroborated by the recollection of the old inhabitants. They look in vain for the haunts of their youth, and at last discover that the places which had peacefully submitted, in their early years, to the spade or the ploughshare, are now covered with streets and habitations. There are no good houses in Belfast of more than sixty years standing, and except, perhaps, two, no public building which has

* The return of the present population was not made when these sheets were put to press, but as it will probably be finished before the work is ready for publication, it will be inserted in the Appendix.

not been erected within the memory of persons living.

Government, &c. of the Town.

The government of the town is vested by charter in the Lord and Constable of the Castle, the sovereign, and burgesses. The principal duty has now devolved upon the sovereign, who holds a court for the trial of petty offences, and who is empowered to make different regulations for the administration of public affairs. His authority for regulating the markets, weights, and some other matters of a minor description, is also recognized within the borough.

The Sovereign.

THE police establishment, however, is more immediately and actively concerned in the government of the town. It consists of a presiding chief magistrate, and constables, besides watchmen, who are appointed to guard the town at night. All these are in regular attendance for the discovery of offenders, and for their committal to gaol or the house of correction. Whether it be a proof of the advantages of this establishment, or of a depravity among the lower orders in Belfast, it is a fact which merits observation, that of all the prisoners who are tried at the assizes for the county,

The police establishment.

more than the half are usually transmitted from this office.

Commission-
ers and Com-
mittee.

All regulations, however, respecting the paving, lighting and cleaning the streets ; and every other circumstance conducive to the health or comfort of the inhabitants, are under the government or superintendence of the police commissioners and committee, who are vested with such authority by act of parliament. The commissioners are twelve in number, elected for life by those inhabitants who pay four pounds or more of annual police tax ; and they at present perform that office, and make those laws intrusted in former times to the discretion of the burgesses, who are also, however, by the act, commissioners of police. The committee are chosen annually, and valuator are also appointed to assess the inhabitants in proportion to the yearly value of their houses or tenements for the support of the police establishment in all its departments.

ANOTHER board of commissioners is likewise authorized by law to regulate the supply of water to the town, which is conveyed through the streets principally by metal pipes.

Early state of
these esta-
blishments.

THE importance to which these several institutions have now risen, makes it necessary and curious to collect any facts relative to their early

state. When preparations, which will probably soon be completed, are making to light this town with gas, the following notice cannot but appear extremely interesting. In 1686, it was ordered, at a meeting of the corporation, that from the 29th of September to the 25th of March, except in moonlight, to prevent the danger of walking the streets, that each inhabitant should hang out from his door or window a lanthorn with a candle for three hours, beginning at seven in the evening. In 1759, the sovereign and burgesses petitioned parliament for assistance to light the town with lamps, a measure which appears to have been soon after carried into effect.

IN 1678, the first regular supply of water was brought to the town by George Macartney, from the upper or tuck mill dam. He conveyed it through wooden pipes, and made three several conduits in the streets for the convenience of the inhabitants.

Trade, &c. of the Town.

THE increasing trade of Belfast since the Revolution has been the principal cause of its improvement in every other respect. The amount of the customs at different periods will shew, in a concise and distinct manner, the rapidity of its progress, as

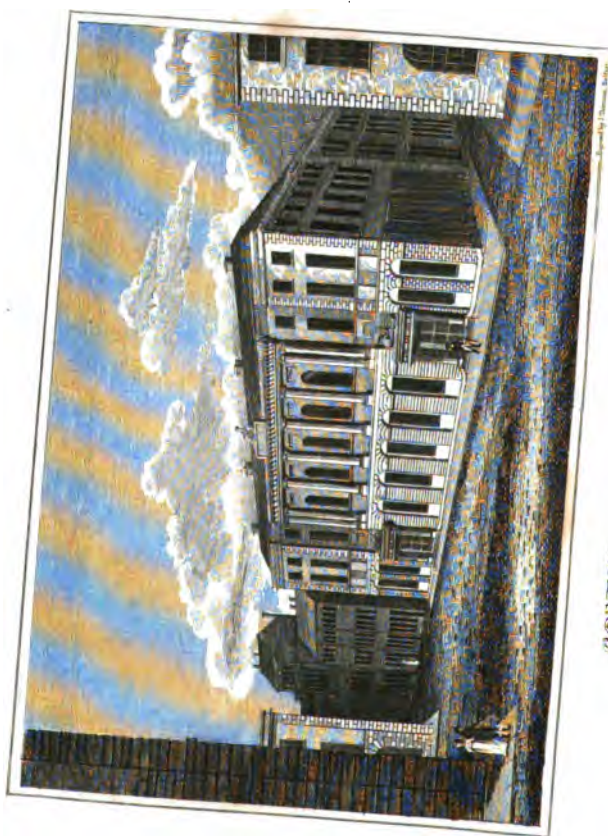
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well as its present commercial importance. In 1690, the customs had risen to twenty thousand pounds per annum ; last year, (1821) they amounted to £386,710,* and the excise to £220,000.

Commercial
buildings.

Of the several establishments connected with the trade of Belfast, the Commercial Buildings, situated in Waring Street and Bridge Street, opposite the Exchange, and near the centre of the town, require to be first described. These buildings, which have been but a very short time finished, are chiefly composed of strong and substantial granite, and are adorned in front with eight Ionic pillars of the same material, supported on a broad cornice above the windows of the first story. One of the principal apartments is occupied as a news-room ; another, of equal dimensions, is intended to be used as an assembly room. There are also numerous offices for merchants or others, who wish for a public and central situation. The side next Bridge Street consists of shops, and it is proposed that an hotel on the most extensive scale shall also be commenced. An area in the interior, and a piazza, supported with metal pillars, are appropriated to the use of the merchants, who assemble here on change days to transact their business ; and to them these buildings, which were for a considerable time in contemplation, are entire-

* For a regular account of the customs, &c. at different periods, see the appendix.



COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS.

ly indebted for their origin. Upwards of £20,000 have been contributed in shares of £100 each, and the proprietors are now formed into a corporate body by act of parliament. Their remuneration consists of the subscriptions to the news-room, the rents of the different shops and offices, and the superior accommodations for mercantile affairs which the place affords.

IN connection with the former establishment, is the Chamber of Commerce, first instituted in the year 1800. Its principal duties are understood to be the preservation of the rights or privileges of the commercial body, and the collection of documents of every description relative to trade and manufactures.

Chamber of
Commerce.

THE Exchange was founded in the year 1769. It is built of brick, partially ornamented in front with cut stone, and possesses but little architectural beauty. There is a piazza on the ground floor, and above it a very elegant and spacious apartment, generally used either as an assembly-room, for town meetings, or for public exhibitions. There is no propriety whatever in continuing to distinguish this building by the name of the Exchange, as it is not at present applied to any mercantile purpose. It is intended, however, that the lower part of the side which fronts Donegall Street shall be converted into

Exchange.

a Post Office, the place now appropriated to that use being unworthy of the town of Belfast both in appearance and situation.

Custom
House.

THE Custom House is an old, gloomy, and unhandsome edifice, situated on Hanover Quay, close to the edge of the water. The building has been enlarged at different periods, and is certainly not such as would be expected in a town which pays so largely to the legislature. It has been reported, however, for some time past, that it is the intention of government to widen and deepen the channel of the river, as well as to erect a new and more magnificent Custom House. No attempts have yet been made to realize these expectations, and it will probably be long before they are carried into effect.

Establish-
ment of the
Quays, &c.

THE establishment of the quays, as well as the origin and progress of the shipping trade here, must be reckoned among the most interesting information which the present work affords. The harbour of this town was formerly called, "the creek of the borough of Belfast." This creek was the mouth of the small river which runs, as already mentioned, through High Street, and extended from the Lagan to the first bridge at Church Lane; and though the lower part only of this stream was used as a quay, it was merely deep enough for lighters, the ships lying out in the channel. The rivulet, however,

which was once the only dock in Belfast, presents now, like the Lagan, a very different appearance from its natural state, being covered in, and confined by embankments to the breadth of a few yards. It was found, however, in the year 1675, too small for the trade of the town, and the corporation determined to improve it, principally by building a strong wall on the south side from the new stone house of George Macartney, as far down as the river Lagan at low water.* In 1696, farther alterations were projected, and it was agreed that money should be levied to make a sufficient sluice at Church Lane and Skippers Lane, and ordered at the same time that the river should be cleaned, to prevent overflowing, by those bordering on it from Chades Bridge to the Mill. The quay was kept in repair by assessments of two pence per ton on vessels discharging at it, and the same rate on ships with freight outwards. Those belonging to freemen paid a penny per ton, and such as only plied to Gar-moyle ten shillings yearly. These funds, however, were probably insufficient for the purpose, as in 1709 the quay was so much choked up with mud, that even a lighter could scarcely come up to the wharf. An act of parliament therefore was passed in that year for improving or completing the work, imposing three pence per ton on foreign ships, and two pence on those belonging to freemen. But it

* Corporation Records.

Origin of
Hanover
Quay.

still remained small and inconvenient till 1720, when Isaac Macartney, merchant, built the wall from the mouth of the dock to the Long Bridge, thus forming what is now called Hanover Quay. This appears to have been the first attempt to make the river Lagan serviceable in this way, all previous improvements having been confined to the small stream which flows through the town. In 1769, the foundation of Chichester Quay was laid, which was afterwards extended down Lime Kiln Dock.

Ballast
Corporation.

ALL the other quays have been of later construction, and the chief improvements in this respect are to be attributed to the exertions of the Ballast Corporation, formed in 1795, and authorized by act of parliament to exact certain sums on registered tonnage, for the purpose of improving the harbour, making docks, employing pilots, with various other regulations for the general advantage of the mercantile and shipping interest. Owing to such powers and resources, a graving dock, capable of containing three vessels of two hundred tons each, has been made ; and there is another of much greater extent, commenced almost three years since, but at present in an unfinished state. Both these, together with the new quays, have been made on ground reclaimed from the sea. Before the institution of the Ballast Corporation there were not more than eight or nine feet water at the quay ; at present, vessels

drawing fourteen feet water, and of four hundred tons burthen, can discharge their lading. The improvements within these ten years have been truly prodigious, Donegall Quay, which is the finest in the town, and one of the principal docks, having been almost entirely made in that time.

THE increase of the shipping trade of Belfast has fully kept pace with the improvement in its docks. It does not appear that the recommendation of Sir John Perrot, to establish shipwrights here produced any effect, as the earliest notice which has been procured relative to this subject, is an account of a vessel of one hundred and fifty tons burthen, built at Belfast in 1636, by the persecuted ministers of the Presbyterian church. In 1700, there was launched here the ship "Loyal Charles," of two hundred and fifty tons burthen, built by the merchants of the town. These, however, as well as a few others of the same kind, were rare and remarkable occurrences; for, previously to the year 1791, there was no regular ship-yard in Belfast, all the vessels belonging to the port being made and repaired in England or Scotland. From that time there have been built here on an average, besides lighters and small craft, about two vessels annually, in general from one hundred and fifty to two hundred and twenty tons burthen and upwards, numerous workmen being now constantly employed both for the wood and iron

Shipping
Trade.

No regular
ship yard
here before
the year 1791.

work of ships. In the year 1811, there were twenty vessels trading exclusively between Belfast and England ; at present, there are nearly thirty, principally Liverpool and London traders. There is also a very fine steam packet for passengers regularly plying between Belfast and Glasgow ; and the number of ships of different kinds belonging to the port exceeds one hundred. There is very little trade carried on at present to the continent, while of the sixty-seven small vessels which belonged to Belfast in 1682, fifteen traded to France, and only an equal number to England. This, however, is undoubtedly the principal port in Ireland for emigration to America. Many of those concerned in this trade are owners of the ships, but they are more frequently under the management of brokers. Belfast is certainly indebted for much of its wealth and consequence to the extent of its shipping trade, which, at least for England, has been brought to a very great degree of despatch and general excellence.

Old Market
House.

As connected with the trade of the town, an account of the market house and markets must necessarily be included. The earliest notice on this head was in 1664, when it was represented that the want of a proper courthouse or town hall occasioned great loss and inconvenience to the inhabitants of this borough ; and as George Macartney, then sovereign, had obtained permission from the Earl of Donegall

that the upper part of the cellars next the market place, to which he had added at his own cost a staircase, with other suitable additions, and ornamented with the King's arms, should be converted to this use, the corporation also acceded to the proposal, and reimbursed the sovereign for the money which he had expended*. This was the first regular town-hall or tholsel, though a temporary place had previously been used for that purpose. In 1665, the inhabitants of Malone, Falls, Dunmurry, and part of the parish of Coole, were, on account of their contributions towards erecting a court-house and market-house here, exempted from the tolls and customs usually paid at the gates of Belfast. This market house was situated at the corner of High Street, next Corn Market. It was only demolished about twelve years ago, its appearance at that time being extremely old and ruinous. It had been last used as a kind of temporary barrack or guard room, a second market-house having been afterwards built at the other extremity of Corn Market, which

* This George Macartney, whose name so frequently occurs in every public business connected with the early state of the town, was the great grand father of the late Earl Macartney. There were different members of this family actively concerned in the advancement and prosperity of Belfast; but the person here alluded to was the first who arrived at this place. He was a captain of horse, and settled here in the year 1649. He held several important situations, and died in this town shortly after the Revolution.

The ancestor of the Northland family also was a merchant in Belfast, in the reign of William III. His resignation of his place of burghess on removing to Dungannon, signed Thomas Knox, and dated 1697, is transcribed in the Records.

Situation of
the markets
in early times.

was also, however, destroyed some years since. The situation of the old building determined that of the market. In 1694, it was found that many persons, not bred merchants, purchased without the gates great quantities of butter, hides, and tallow, to the prejudice of the free merchants and traders of the town, it was ordered that none of these goods should be bought or sold elsewhere than "between the upper Castle gate, Church Lane and Skipper Lane on either side of the river, and in Bridge Street, between the bridge called the Stone Bridge, and the corners turning down to Broad Street * and Rosemary Lane." The market fluctuated for a long time about these places. It is only a very few years since High Street, Corn Market, and Ann Street, were the chief marts. Poultry Square was afterwards used for the same purpose, but now May's Market, built at the extremity of Chichester Street, on ground reclaimed from the sea, is the principal place for the sale of butter, meal, eggs, potatoes, and vegetables. Most of these articles are also sold in several other smaller markets, which are much better situated for the convenience of the inhabitants. One of these is in Castle Place, another in William Street South, and a third, which has been lately commenced, off High Street. The sale of flesh meat is not confined to any particular situation, being disposed of in Hercules Street, Corn

Present
markets.

* Waring Street was formerly called Broad Street.



ARTILLERY BARRACKS.

Market, and several other places. The Weigh House, where pork and firkin butter, which form so large a part of the Belfast exports, are bought, is a plain low building at the end of Waring Street. Smithfield Square is the place where cattle are sold, as also pedlars goods and numerous other articles. The market for grain is also held here three days in the week, and for hides four.

THERE are three barracks in this town ; one for artillery, and two for infantry. The former, which stands in Carrickfergus Street, is a very neat and convenient structure, but at present nearly unoccupied. Of the latter, the principal is also situated in Carrickfergus Street. It was erected at the time of the last rebellion, and forms a very spacious square, surrounded with houses. The oldest edifice of this kind, however, is in Barrack Street. It was built in 1737, but is not now in use, the number of soldiers at present stationed here being much smaller than formerly.

THERE is likewise a theatre in Belfast, very excellently and tastefully fitted up in the inside, though its exterior is not only unornamented, but heavy and disagreeable.

*Manufactures,**Cotton.*

Belfast the
first place in
Ireland
where it was
introduced.

THE principal manufacture of this town is cotton in its various branches. It was introduced into Belfast so lately as the year 1777, and its amazing increase since that period must be a convincing proof, not only of the expediency of its introduction, but of the perseverance of those who have been concerned in its rapid and unequalled progress. The present importance of the cotton trade in Ulster must indeed be truly surprising, not only because so few years have elapsed since its establishment, but when we consider that it was first introduced on speculation into the Belfast Poor House as an employment for the children. The immense number of persons engaged in this business, and the multiplicity of its dependant trades and occupations, have deservedly rendered it an object of the first consequence to the inhabitants of this town.

Divides itself
into two
branches.

THE manufacture of cotton divides itself into two branches, the spinning of the wool into yarn, and the weaving of the latter. Large manufactories and extensive capitals are generally required for the former purpose. The two trades are often disconnected, many persons in Belfast giving out the yarn to be woven who are not concerned in the spinning of the wool. It would be a very arduous

undertaking to ascertain the number of looms in this town and parish. In many of the streets and populous roads in the suburbs of the town, particularly at Ballymacarrett, the sound of the loom issues almost from every house, and all, with very few exceptions, are employed in the different branches of the cotton trade. In the year 1800, this business engaged in Belfast and its neighbourhood, including its branches and connections, 27,000 persons. For the eleven years succeeding that time, the trade still continued to increase, and within that short period there were employed in Belfast, and a circuit of ten miles round it, for the cotton manufacture exclusively, fifteen steam engines, equal to 212 horses' power, and driving 99,000 spindles. In this town and its immediate vicinity, there were in the year 1814, eight cotton mills at work. There are at present seven, one of which is the largest in Ireland. The trade in general, particularly the spinning department, appears to be in a more flourishing condition at present than it was some years ago, and though there is a vast number of weavers resident in this town, those of the surrounding country for many miles are also in most cases employed by persons in Belfast.

Its extent
at different
periods.

In a better
condition
than it was
some years
ago.

CONNECTED with the preceding are those mills for printing and bleaching cotton, which also form an

Mills for
spinning and
bleaching

important source of employment to great numbers of people. There is not either in the town or parish any extensive establishment for calico printing. There is a small manufactory of this kind on the Falls road, a short distance from Belfast ; but the works at White-house, and Hyde Park, where this ingenious and elegant manufacture has attained a very great degree of perfection, are both beyond the precincts of the parish. There are also two small mills near the town, for bleaching cotton, one on the Shankill, and the other on the Lodge road.

Linen Cloth. **THERE** is very little linen cloth woven in this town or parish. In 1807, Belfast contained 723 looms, only four of which were for weaving linen, and the number is probably not much greater at present. The market here for the sale of brown linen is situated in Donegall Street. It is supplied from various quarters of the country, and has an excellent character for fineness of quality.

**White Linen
Hall**

THE White Linen Hall is a large quadrangular building, enclosing an extensive area, and finely situated at the termination of Donegall Place. The front, or rather the centre, of this edifice has a very pleasing effect, being handsome and light with an extremely neat spire. It is entirely surrounded with railing, and is the principal promenade in the town. The numerous apartments which the build-



WHITE LINEN HALL.

ing contains are chiefly occupied as the rooms and offices of the linen drapers. The cloth is here received from the bleachers, and prepared for sale or exportation, being chiefly carried either to England, America, or the West Indies.

THOUGH there is but little linen woven in this town or neighbourhood, the bleaching of this article is carried on to a very great extent. In the parish of Belfast alone there are twelve bleach greens, which beautify the country and give employment to its inhabitants.

Linen
Bleaching.

THE canvas manufacture was established in Belfast about the year 1784, when six looms commenced. There are now two extensive manufactories, besides a great number of rope walks.

Canvas and
rope manu-
facture.

ON the Blacksaff river at Cromac, near its junction with the Lagan, is a large paper mill, the only one in the parish. It is driven both by steam and water.

Paper.

THE casting of iron has been long established in Belfast and Ballymacarrett. The Belfast and Lagan founderies are very extensive, particularly in the casting of metal wheels, and in the former several steam engines have been made.

Iron.

THERE are two glass houses in Ballymacarrett, and one in Belfast. The manufacture is entirely confined to white or flint glass. One of those in Ballymacarrett, which is at present unoccupied, is

Glass.

one hundred and twenty feet in height, and sixty in diameter, having been originally built for the purpose of making window and green bottle glass, both of which are now imported from Scotland.

Salt.

THERE are also two extensive salt manufactories, both beyond the Lagan, and built on ground reclaimed from the sea.

Vitriol, &c.

THERE are likewise in Ballymacarrett two manufactories for vitriol, bleachers smalts, &c.

Breweries,
&c.

BELFAST contains five breweries, and one of the most complete and extensive distilleries in Ireland.

Miscellaneous
manufac-
tures.

OF the extent of its more inconsiderable manufactures, such as soap and candles, hats, leather, and some others, a good estimate may be formed, when the population of Belfast, and it might almost be said of the neighbouring counties, is considered.*

* The astonishing progress which has been made in this town these some years past in several branches of the mechanic arts, particularly jewellery and engraving, is worthy of particular notice. As to the former, the large and splendid shops which Belfast now contains, have sprung up with wonderful rapidity. It is not more than twenty years since there was but one poor working jeweller in all this town. Though earlier attempts seem to have been made in the engraving, they were not attended with success. In 1753, a copper-plate press was set up, and an engraver occasionally visited this place, but the first of the trade who settled, nor was his stay probably very long, was Daniel Pomareda, who took up his abode at John Templeton's in North-street, next door to the sign of the Still. There are now four or five establishments, employing numerous workmen for copper plate engraving, die striking, and every other branch of the business, and in some of which, the trade, in point of execution, has reached a very considerable degree of respectability.

THE mills in the parish for the preparation of grain are not so numerous as might be expected, nor as the consumption of Belfast would appear to require. It contains but one flour mill, on the Falls road, a short distance from the town, which is however extremely large. The Belfast market is chiefly supplied with meal from the adjoining country, the want of corn mills and others in the parish being satisfactorily accounted for by considering, that the water is chiefly required for the bleach-greens, and the facility with which every thing of this description can be procured in Belfast.

THERE are likewise several manufactories both in the town and parish for starch, logwood, and glue. In this enumeration, it is also necessary to include the manufacture of bricks, and burning of lime, which afford employment to a very considerable number of people. The latter, particularly, has experienced a very great increase within these some years, and is certainly a symptom of improvement in other respects. Great quantities are carried to the county of Down, there being few places in which the limestone is found in such profusion or purity as in the parish of Belfast.

o

Institutions for Charitable Purposes, and Reformation of Manners.

Incorporated
Charitable
Society.

THE Belfast Incorporated Charitable Society, or, as it is more generally denominated, the Poor House, for the reception of aged and infirm persons as well as for the support and instruction of children destitute of protectors, has long remained a noble proof of the general philanthropy which prevails among the inhabitants of this town. It stands at the extremity of Donegall Street, in an elevated and healthful situation. The ground was granted by the late Marquis of Donegall, the building completed by subscriptions and the produce of a lottery, and first opened for the purposes above stated in the year 1774. Since its commencement, it has preserved annually about three hundred individuals, old and young; the former from want and misery, the latter from idleness and vice. The children are here instructed in the elementary branches of education, till they are considered capable of being apprenticed out to trades. The old are carefully attended to, being permitted to increase their comforts by their own industry; and it is a proof not less of the instability of fortune than of the great benefits of the establishment, that an individual was lately received into the Poor House who had, in more prosperous times, contributed to its



- P O O R H O U S E .

support. All its inmates, varying in number, but commonly about three hundred and fifty, are fed and clothed at the expense of the society. The dress of the children is uniform; they walk on the Sabbath Day, hand in hand, to the respective houses of worship; and due care is taken, in every respect, of their moral and religious habits. The whole government of the Institution is conducted in the most methodical manner, and it receives contributions from every denomination of Christians, all being anxious for the continuance of an establishment which is as invaluable to the poor as it is creditable to the opulent.

THE House of Industry in Smithfield, which is conducted in an inconsiderable building, presents many of the same incalculable benefits. It was instituted in the year 1809, for the purpose of abolishing pauperism, and for supplying the really necessitous with the means of support. Poor persons resident in the town, who are found upon examination proper objects of charity, are supplied gratuitously with weekly rations of fuel and provisions. Nor are its advantages confined to this. Hundreds of females are furnished with flax to spin at their own houses, and are paid for their work without any deduction, a plan which not only guards against idleness but obviates that repug-

House of
Industry.

nance which many feel at being considered objects of charity.

House of
Correction.

THE House of Correction was erected in 1817, by presentment of the Grand Jury. The appearance of this place corresponds with its use. It is a dark, strong building of brick, surrounded with a high wall. There is a house for the governor of the prison, and numerous cells and apartments for the confinement or reformation of convicts. There is a spacious hall here for the Quarter Sessions, in which the sovereign's and seneschal's courts are also held. The prisoners are not suffered to remain unemployed. Those who are acquainted with trades are furnished with materials, and obliged to work during the period of their imprisonment. The rest are employed in spinning, chipping logwood, or picking oakum. The discipline of this prison is so strict and correct that its influence has been most salutary on the conduct of the disorderly in this town and neighbourhood. There is a small chapel within the building where divine service is regularly performed.

Society for
Discounte-
nancing Vice.

THERE has been a branch of the Society for Discountenancing Vice established here since the year 1815, which has proved highly beneficial, owing to the low prices at which religious books and tracts can be purchased. There is a Bible Society formed in this town, as also a Ladies' Bible Associa-

Bible
Societies.



FEVER HOSPITAL.

tion, patronized by some of the most learned and wealthy members of the community. By the report of the Committee in October 1821, which was as interesting as the occasion on which it was delivered, the number of bibles issued from the Repository during the preceding year was 752, and of testaments 604.

THE Belfast Saving Bank certainly yields to few Saving Bank. institutions in point of real, substantial advantage. No deposits, however small, are rejected, and the fund which the poor are thus enabled almost insensibly to form, cannot but be found of inestimable benefit in times of scarcity and disease, or when no longer able to work for their support.

THE Fever Hospital is an extensive and commodious building, situated in Frederick Street, and calculated for the reception of more than two hundred patients. Its advantages, during the late severe and continued attack of typhus fever, have been fully experienced by the inhabitants of this town. Fever Hospital. A dispensary, but on a much more confined scale than the present Fever Hospital, had been established here in 1792, by which the poor of the place were furnished with medicines and medical advice. The mode of connecting a dispensary with an hospital, was adopted in the year 1797, and has not been discontinued in the present enlarged establishment. In

1817, the new hospital was opened, when seventeen patients were removed to it from the old, but very shortly after this removal the typhus fever broke out, and there were admitted in the space of thirteen weeks 461, and in the succeeding three months 959 persons. By act of parliament the Grand Jury is enabled to grant £400 annually to its support, so that no patient belonging either to the town or country is refused admittance. The dispensary department not only extends to the distribution of medicines, but poor persons are visited at their homes when unable to attend the physicians or surgeons. From its commencement in 1817 to May 1820, the total number of patients admitted was 3452, besides which, and exclusively of the medicines furnished to the Poor House and Lying in Hospital, there were 10,718 prescriptions filled for extern poor, for the year ending in April, 1820.

Society for
Clothing the
Poor.

THE other establishments of a similar kind, such as the Penitentiary, to which the whole province contributes subscriptions, the Lying-in Hospital, and the Society for Clothing the Poor, are conducted in small or private buildings, but their effects have been no less beneficial and the motives of those benevolent persons who devote their time and attention to such objects equally merit the sincere approbation of the wise and good.

THE Lancasterian School stands in Frederick Street. The Belfast Sunday School was established in the year 1802, since which time the excellent and ingenious system of Mr. Lancaster has been brought to maturity. The original plan consisted only of a Sunday School, but the present establishment has existed these several years past with increasing energy, liberal in its principles and effective in the diffusion of knowledge. No distinction of religion excludes any from its benefits, and it is at present attended by about 700 children.

Lancasterian
School.

THE large house in Brown Street was, until lately, a Sunday School. To this has been added a daily school, and the two at present communicate instruction to more than 1400 persons. The plan which has been adopted is extremely judicious and worthy of imitation. The children pay a very trifling sum as a compensation for what they are taught, which, by preserving the independence of their parents, is often a strong inducement to profit by the advantages which the school affords.

Brown Street
School.

THERE is another Sunday School in the Methodist Chapel in Donegall Square, established nearly two years ago. It is attended by about 600 children, and is likewise deserving in every respect of the patronage and admiration of the community.

Methodist
Chapel
School.

Society for
instructing
the Deaf and
Dumb.

A BRANCH of the Society for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb has been lately formed in Belfast, an institution which is not less praiseworthy in its views than successful and ingenious in their execution.

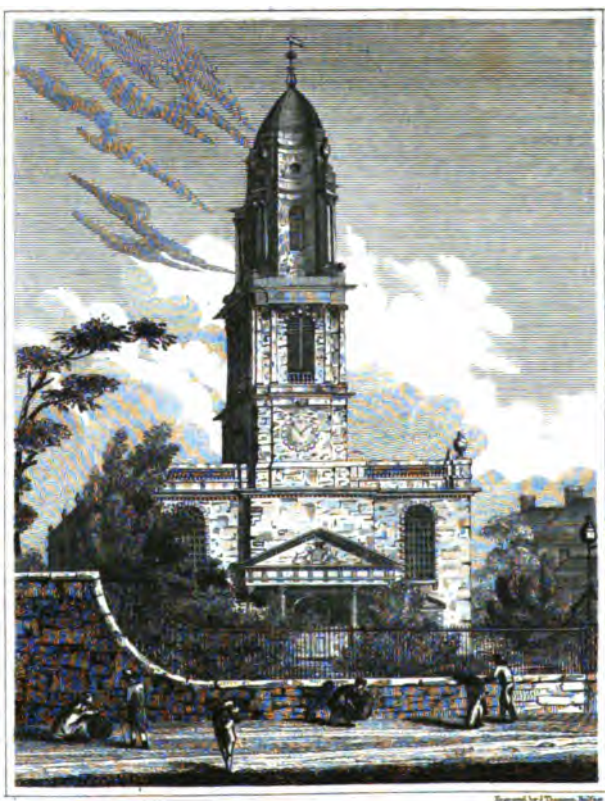
Harp Society.

THERE is likewise a Harp Society here, by which blind children, in contributing their efforts to preserve from disuse the ancient and delightful instrument of our country, are enabled to procure their subsistence in a manner equally gratifying to the ear and to the heart.

Houses of Worship.

The old
Church.

THE church of this town formerly stood on the south side of High Street, near the quay. Many old inhabitants recollect this antique building. The sovereign and burgesses formerly repaired to it in great state at the celebration of divine service. The sovereign was habited in a scarlet or crimson cloak, and the twelve burgesses in black, preceded by the town serjeants bearing the mace. This practice has long since been discontinued, though there is a pew in each of the churches reserved for their use, and always called the "Burgesses' Seat." In 1627, an order was issued by the corporation, that every burgess and free commoner should attend the sovereign to church. In 1615, however, a more



ST ANN'S CHURCH

strict observance was required, and small fines were imposed on the inhabitants of the borough for non-attendance at public worship, a householder for such neglect incurring a penalty of two pence, a woman a penny, a servant a halfpenny, and, under certain limitations, every child dwelling within their houses a farthing.

THE ancient state of this church is pretty clearly shown by an item in the records in 1645, of five shillings for repairing it with shingles. It was pulled down, however, in 1777, being considered both unsafe and inconvenient, and the foundation of St. Anne's, or the Parish Church, situated in Donegall-street, was laid the same year. This building, on account of its high and beautiful steeple, is probably the most magnificent in the town. The upper part of the steeple is of wood, but the whole is certainly rather disproportionable in point of size with the front view of the building. The roof is arched and supported with columns, which, though rendering the galleries low, communicate to its interior an appearance of considerable grandeur. The seats in this church are principally of mahogany, and it also contains a fine organ.

The present
parish
Church.

THE Chapel of Ease in High Street, on the site of the former church, was commenced in 1811. Its

The Chapel
of Ease.

portico is by far the most beautiful and costly piece of architecture in the town, or perhaps in the kingdom. It formed the front of Ballyscullen, the celebrated palace of the late Earl of Bristol, and was the munificent gift of the present Bishop of Down and Connor. This portico is of the Corinthian order, consisting of six lofty and massive columns, and four fluted pilasters. The capitals of these pillars are beautifully executed : the pediment is ornamented with the arms of the see and of the town of Belfast. Though the interior of the chapel appears bare, the gallery is supported by very handsome pillars. The chancel is lighted from the top by an elliptical window, and supported by two very beautiful columns of the Ionic order. This church is capable of accommodating upwards of 1200 persons ; but the effect which its appearance might otherwise produce, is nearly altogether lost by its incongruity with the surrounding buildings, which are among the oldest and meanest in the town.

**Presbyterian
Meeting
Houses.**

THERE are four Presbyterian meeting houses in Belfast. There is an obscure tradition that a place of worship of this kind existed at a very early period in Hercules Street ; but at the beginning of the last century, the only building in the town for the Presbyterian worship was an old and inconvenient house, which had probably been long



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CHAPEL OF EASE.

in-existence, standing in Rosemary Street, where that of the First Congregation is now erected. Being found too small for the increasing numbers who attended it, a separation took place; a new house was built behind the former, in 1708, to which 120 families removed, forming thus the Second Presbyterian Congregation. In 1717, nine years after this event, the original old house was rebuilt. They remained in this situation till 1722, when the separation of the Presbytery of Antrim from the General Synod, on points of doctrine, caused a farther disunion among the members of these two bodies. Those who adhered to the principles of the Synod, seceded from the rest, and having erected a new house, in 1722, also in Rosemary Street, constituted thus the Third Presbyterian Congregation. In 1783, the meeting house of the First Congregation, built, as already stated, in 1717, was again taken down and the present edifice, the third which has stood on the same spot, was erected. The house of the Second Congregation was likewise rebuilt on the site of the former, in the year 1790. Both are enclosed in the same ground, and, as they formed one religious society originally, still remain closely connected. To these was added, in 1792, the meeting house of the Fourth Presbyterian Congregation, which stands in Donegall Street.

First Congregation.

Second Congregation.

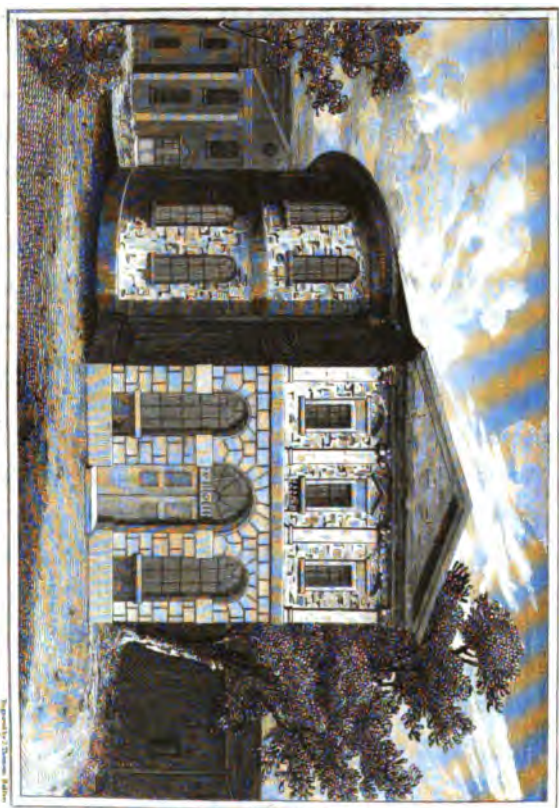
Third Congregation.

Fourth Congregation.

ALL these are large and commodious. That of the First Congregation is an admired structure, of an elliptical form, and built of brick ; that of the Third is the oldest place of worship in the town. The front projects considerably ; and the building, in every respect, indicates its antiquity, the windows being small, the roof steep, and the house devoid of all external ornament. This is also the largest congregation, the Presbyterians in the country parts of the parish being chiefly members of it.*

* The following are the names of the pastors of these several congregations, with the dates of their nomination :

- First. 1672. Rev. W. Keyes, who resigned in 1674.
 1675. Rev. Patrick Adair. This minister, who died in 1694, was considerably distinguished as a public character and as a man of talents. He left some valuable MSS. on the first settlement of the Presbyterians in Ulster, which were unfortunately lost.
 1694. Rev. John Macbride. 1711. Rev. Thomas Melling, his colleague.
 1719. Rev. Samuel Halliday.
 1756. Rev. Thomas Drennan, his colleague and successor.
 — Rev. Clotworthy Brown. Mr. Drennan's first colleague. He died in 1755.
 1756. Rev. James Mackay. Mr. Drennan's second colleague and successor.
 1770. Rev. James Crombie, D. D. Mr. Mackay's colleague and successor.
 1790. Rev. William Bruce, D. D. one of its present pastors.
 1812. Rev. William Bruce, his colleague.
- Second. 1708. Rev. ——— Kirkpatrick, D. D. and M. D.
 1744. Rev. Gilbert Kennedy.
 1775. Rev. James Bryson.
 1791. Rev. Patrick Vance.
 1800. Rev. W. H. Drummond, D. D.
 1816. Rev. W. D. H. M'Ewen, its present minister.
- Third. 1722. Rev. Thomas Mastertown.
 1747. Rev. William Laird, his colleague and successor.
 1791. Rev. Sinclair Kelburn, his colleague and successor.
 1799. Rev. Samuel Hanna, D. D. its present minister.
- Fourth. 1792. Rev. James Bryson.
 ———. Rev. Robert Acheson, its present minister.



**MEETING HOUSE OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CONGREGATION
built 1783.**

THERE are two meeting houses for Seceders in this town ; one in Berry Street, erected in 1770, and the second, which has been but lately finished, in Lower Arthur Street.

Seceding
Meeting
Houses.

THERE are also three Methodist Chapels in Belfast. The largest is situated in Donegall Square, the second is in Academy Street, and the third in Cotton Court. These chapels are neatly built, and two of them are of the Wesleyan principles.

Methodist
Chapels.

IN Donegall Street there is an Independent Meeting House, built in 1804, and an excellent, well proportioned building on the Dublin road south of the Linen Hall, for Covenanters, or that sect called the Reformed Presbyterians. In Frederick Street the Society of Friends have a neat house erected in 1812, and in King Street the most considerable congregation in the town, called Baptists, have a small place of worship.

Independ-
ents.

Covenanters.

Quakers.

Baptists.

THERE are two Roman Catholic Chapels in this town numerously attended. Before these were built the number of Roman Catholics in Belfast

Roman Ca-
tholic Cha-
pels.

The following are the names, &c. of the ministers of the two congregations of Seceders :—

First. 1770. Rev. William Carmichael.

1798. Rev. John Nicholson.

1814. Rev. William Carr, its present pastor,

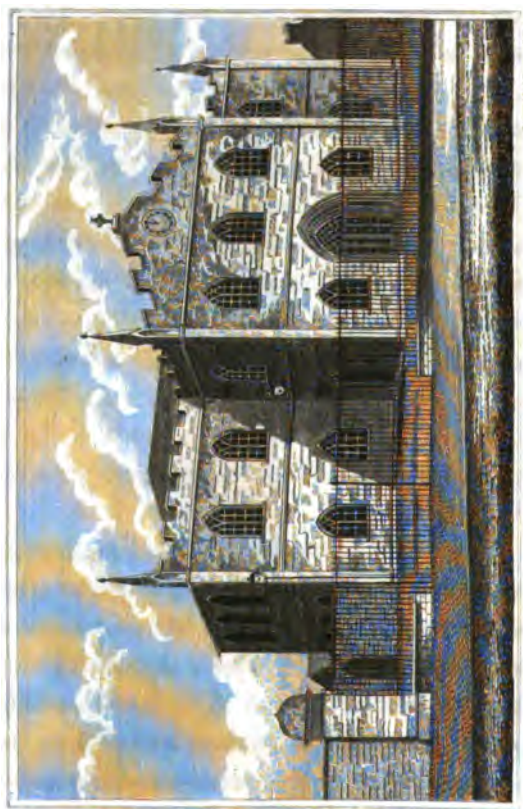
Second. 1821. Rev. John Edgar, its first and present minister.

was extremely inconsiderable, mass having been celebrated in the open air at the old grave-yard in Malone, called Friars Bush, and afterwards in a small waste house in Castle Street. The Catholics, however, increasing with the general population, St. Mary's, or what is now called the Old Chapel, was built in 1783. In 1811, another of greater beauty and extent was erected near the top of Donegall Street, which is one of the finest edifices in the town. The front is ornamented with a cross and pinnacles of freestone ; the doors and windows are in the Gothic style, and the chapel is likewise furnished with a gallery and organ.

Literary Establishments, State of Learning, &c.

**Academical
Institution.**

THE most important subject under the head of literary establishments is the Academical Institution. Its foundation was laid in the year 1810, but at present it forms only a part of the original extent of building, though it is one of the most elegant and best proportioned edifices in the town, which probably arises however more from situation than from any great beauty of architecture. It stands at the western end of the town, forming a very fine termination to Chichester Street, Donegall Square North, and Wellington Place. The ground in which it is erected, containing about four Irish acres, was granted by the Marquis of Donegall,



ROMAN CATHOLIC CHAPEL.

and is enclosed on three of its sides by a wall, and in front by an iron railing. The building is of brick, considerably ornamented with cut stone ; and its whole appearance presents nothing of gloom or heaviness. There is a dwelling-house at each end, (with extensive dormitories for the accommodation of boarders) one for the Classical, and the other for the English head master, besides many suitable apartments throughout the building for lecture and school rooms.

THE uses and advantages of this Institution, Its origin. however, are more important subjects. In this part of Ireland, which is confessedly so rich and populous, an establishment calculated to improve its literary taste and character, must long have appeared a desirable object. Some intelligent and enlightened inhabitants of Belfast and its vicinity, fully aware of the inestimable advantages which would accrue to the whole province of Ulster from the establishment of a college in this town or in any other eligible situation, entered into the spirit of such an undertaking with the most disinterested ardour and the most laudable promptitude. It was never intended that the benefits of such an institution should be restricted to the instruction of the members of one religion, or to the preparation for one profession. The abstruseness of science was to be enlivened with the charms of polite literature, and a system of educa-

tion, not less extensive than liberal, was speedily projected and as earnestly desired to be carried into effect.

Amount of
subscriptions,
&c.

Subscriptions were accordingly commenced in the year 1807, and the sum of £16,000 was soon contributed, which has since been greatly increased from different quarters, particularly by liberal remittances from the Marquis of Hastings and other Irishmen in India, zealous for the improvement of their native country. A very considerable part of these subscriptions was expended in the erection of a suitable building, and in procuring other necessary accompaniments. The Institution, after having been incorporated by act of parliament, in 1810, was intrusted to the care of some of the most active or liberal proprietors, called Managers and Visitors. A President and four Vice-Presidents, distinguished for their rank or talents, were also chosen, and the most sanguine expectations were formed of a full and speedy accomplishment of the wishes of the community.

Insufficient
for the ori-
ginal design.

LARGE however as the contributions undoubtedly were, and notwithstanding the general ardour which was displayed in the prosecution of this most praiseworthy design, the collections that had been made were judged insufficient, both for the completion of the original building, and the endowment of the



COLLEGE.

proposed number of professorships. The proprietors determined to solicit the assistance of Government, and shortly after the support of the General Synod of Ulster, and the Seceding Bodies in Ireland. In all these applications they were successful. The sum of £1500 was bestowed annually on this Institution by parliament for three years. This grant, however, has since been withdrawn; but great hopes are at present entertained that it may be renewed, which is very much to be desired, not only on the score of pecuniary advantage, but on account of the increased respectability and confidence always attending those establishments that receive the countenance and support of the government of the country. From the Synod and the Seceding Bodies, encouragement equally flattering and cordial was received. They accepted the advances of the proprietors, and agreed so far to patronize the Institution as to recommend it as a proper seminary for the education of the young men under their care designed for the ministry, to require their moderators and committees to attend the annual examinations, for the purpose of reporting on the proficiency of the students, and the general government of the College; and finally, to consider the general certificate of the Faculty, as equivalent to a degree in arts from any of the Scotch universities. In consequence of such support, these bodies have become

Assistance
from Go-
vernment,
&c.

more connected with this Institution than any other religious society. Under the consideration of the inadequacy of the funds, it had been deemed advisable to limit the original plan to the endowment of Professors in Natural Philosophy, Moral Philosophy, Logic and Belles Lettres, Hebrew, Greek, Latin and Mathematics, these being the first and most indispensable studies for professional persons. It had also been considered necessary to add to the establishment schools for Classics, Mathematics, Arithmetic, and the other elementary branches of education. These schools were opened with appropriate ceremony on the first of February 1814, but it was not till November 1815, that the college classes commenced. Since that period seven sessions have elapsed, and the number of students each year has progressively increased, having amounted last season to about two hundred, besides those who attended the popular lectures.

THOUGH the external business of the Institution is regulated by the Boards of Managers and Visitors, the more important affairs relating to the moral and literary behaviour and proficiency of the college students are committed to the Faculty instituted in the year 1818, consisting of the several professors, who have hitherto been vigilant and prompt in the performance of these duties. The schools, attended by about four hundred pupils, are under the super-

intendance of the different teachers, styled the Board of Masters, who make rules and regulations for their general government.

THE college department then at present bears considerable resemblance in plan and mode of instruction to the university of Glasgow. The session commences at November, and terminates at May. The students usually attend Logic the first year, Moral Philosophy the second, and Natural Philosophy the third. During these sessions they must also receive instructions in Hebrew, Greek, Latin and Mathematics ; but it is found often desirable to attend some of the former classes a second time. From the excellent schools also in the Institution they are enabled with the utmost convenience to improve and extend their elementary education, and to derive instruction on branches of literature which their former situation or habits might never have afforded. The lectures are read by the professors, their pupils are examined daily on the subjects of these lectures, which are farther impressed on their minds by the production of frequent essays. Every regular student is examined on his entrance in Greek and Latin, and in the second and third years of his attendance his memory is refreshed by a re-examination, at the commencement of the session, on those subjects which he studied the preceding year. At May the annual and public examinations already

*Routine of
business in
the College.*

alluded to take place, when prizes are distributed, not only for the excellence which is then displayed, but there are also others of a more important kind determined by the unbiassed votes of the students themselves for general proficiency during the entire six months. There are several other examinations and essays, principally of a voluntary kind, but accompanied with suitable rewards, proposed by the Boards of Managers and Visitors, the Faculty and the Professors individually, for the encouragement of talents. The motives to exertion, therefore, are thus numerous; but even if such inducements did not exist, the most strict attention, and the consequent improvement, could not be evaded.

THE professional student, after having passed through all these trials, has to give a still more satisfactory and difficult exhibition of his abilities than any which he has yet experienced. He must prove himself, by a full examination, thoroughly acquainted with Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Logic and Belles Lettres, Metaphysics and Moral Philosophy, Natural Philosophy and Mathematics, and, if found duly prepared, he is presented with the general certificate of the Institution, the possession of which entitles him to commence the most important part of his labours, the study of divinity. There are two professors of Divinity in the College appointed by the respective Synods, and to the zealous and friendly co-opera-

tion of these most respectable bodies must in a great measure be ascribed the success which has hitherto attended the Belfast Institution. Their patronage was freely granted, and it is confidently to be expected, that it shall never be found that such support has been misplaced. In the short space of time which this establishment has existed, though struggling with difficulties, it has fully confirmed the hopes of its warmest friends, and realized in many respects the great and manifold advantages of home education.

BESIDES those which have been mentioned, there are several other classes in the College of a more popular kind. The professor of Logic has a senior Belles Lettres class, in which the principles of taste and criticism, as well as the progress of polite literature, are illustrated and explained. The professors of Natural Philosophy and Anatomy also deliver popular lectures of great interest and importance, the former on Chemistry and Natural History, and the latter on Botany. There is likewise a lecturer on Elocution, and, belonging to the school department, excellent classes for English, Geography, Italian, French, Drawing, and many other departments of literature. It is much to be regretted, however, that the funds are at present so low as to preclude the hope of endowments for professors of Civil History, Agriculture and some other branches

Library, &c. of knowledge equally necessary. The library contains upwards of two thousand volumes, many of them valuable, and principally connected with the subjects which are studied in the different classes. The philosophical apparatus is new, valuable, and on the most approved construction; and the museum, though not yet very extensive, is daily increasing in magnitude.

As at present established, therefore, this Institution is far from being confined to one object, for numbers attend both the philosophical and the popular lectures, who have no design in view but the improvement of their minds. In one of the classes last year, there were persons of four religious persuasions, and Protestants of the Established Church have frequently attended the classes with considerable profit. It is also worthy of notice, and it is not mentioned here as a matter of course, that all those who have received their education in this seminary have fully sustained, either as ministers or teachers, the credit of their instructors, and have felt the entire benefit of that diligence which they were there required to exercise.

**Society for
Promoting
Knowledge.**

THE Belfast Society for Promoting Knowledge was instituted in the year 1788. It consists of a library containing nearly four thousand volumes, a small museum, and some philosophical apparatus.

Some of the books are rare, but they are in general approved modern works. There is also an excellent library in the Belfast Academy, a seminary which has acquired great and deserved celebrity as a classical school. The books here are old and valuable, chiefly on divinity and church history.

Belfast
Academy.

THE Belfast Literary Society was formed in 1801. Its objects are understood to consist of inquiries into science, antiquities, topography, or subjects of general literature. The meetings of this Society are monthly, commencing at October and ending at May; but whatever advantage the members themselves may have experienced, the public have not certainly derived that benefit which was expected from their labours, and it is now several years since any papers or fasciculi were published.

Literary
Society.

THERE has been a Natural History Society lately formed in the town, which has already made some progress in the collection of a museum, and which is principally composed of persons who have received their education at the College, or who are still connected with it.

Natural His-
tory Society.

BELFAST, however, can by no means be called a literary town. It has been styled the Athens of Ireland; but if it be meant by such a designation, that the same love for literature and the arts which

Literary cha-
racter, &c. of
Belfast.

distinguished the greatest of the Grecian states prevails also here, no name was ever more grossly misapplied. There is very little taste in Belfast for the fine arts, nor do the inhabitants generally display in their ordinary intercourse that desire for literature which were to be wished and expected. It has been said to have meddled too much with politics to have attended sufficiently to such affairs, and that a greater relish for literary pursuits might modify this political spirit. It may, however, be at present distinctly perceived, that the literary respectability of this town is increasing, and it may confidently be anticipated, that every succeeding year will render that increase more extended and more durable. The College must be the principal cause of this. It will widely communicate the benefits of a liberal education, which is incompatible with no situation in life. The Scotch universities are numerous attended by individuals who are not designed for any learned profession. The consequences are as well known as they are creditable to that nation. The people are enlightened and industrious, not less, but more intent on commerce and manufactures. One of their greatest universities is contained in one of the greatest trading cities in the world, and the classes of that very university are swelled with numbers who are hereafter to be engaged in that very trade. It may fairly be expected, that Belfast shall one day be similarly si-

tuated, and all who are anxious for the improvement of this town and province should zealously promote so desirable an object.

There are three newspapers, but at present no magazine, published in Belfast.* This latter, however, will perhaps accompany the rise of the College, and even now there is reason to think that a periodical work of that literary and amusing kind, which suits so well the taste of every polished age would meet with ample encouragement in this town. It would vastly contribute to improve the rising taste in this part of the country, by holding out encouragement for original efforts, and by combining critical disquisitions with literary and scientific investigation. Numerous attempts have been made to establish a work of such a kind here. So early as the year 1741, the "Publick Register, or Weekly Magazine," printed in London, was republished in this town. But the principal production of this de-

Newspapers,
&c.

* The names of these papers are the News-Letter, published twice a week; the Commercial Chronicle, three times, and the Irishman, once. Of these the News-Letter is said to be, with the exception of one, the eldest periodical print in Ireland, having been established in the year 1737. The early publications are extremely curious. On account of the great changes which have since taken place, the following passage, at the end of the paper is worth copying:—"Belfast, Printed by Henry and Francis Joy, at the Peacock, in Bridge-street, where all manner of Printing Business is carefully done. Subscriptions for this Paper in Belfast 4s. 4d. per annum; 6s. 6d. in the neighbouring towns; 7s. 7d. in Ballymoney and Coleraine. Advertisements of moderate length inserted at 2s. 2d. the first time, and 6d. each continuance."

scription was the **Belfast Magazine**, which continued for several years, and was only abandoned in 1814. Though conducted by men of talents, this work was of too dry and political a cast, either to please universally or to be profitable to the proprietors, and the transitory existence of all those which preceded and followed it, must be ascribed to causes of a similar nature.

Literary
characters.

OF literary characters, the most distinguished, perhaps, which Belfast has produced was Mrs. Elizabeth Hamilton, who was born here in the year 1758. This lady, as a moral and entertaining writer, is greatly to be praised. The "Cottagers of Glenburnie," "Letters on Education," "Modern Philosophers," and several other works of considerable celebrity, bear ample testimony to her talents.

EXCEPT the late Dr. Drennan there are no other names requiring at present particular notice. Dr. Drennan was the author of "Fugitive Pieces," principally in verse, of some merit. He has been more famous however as a political writer, and has been much admired for the steadiness and consistency of his principles in that respect, as well as for that bold and nervous style in which he unfolded his sentiments.

It must not be omitted, however, to make mention of the illustrious Dr. Joseph Black, who, though born in France, received the greater part of his education in this town, to which his family had for a length of time belonged, and where some of his relations are still living. He arrived here in 1740, being then in the twelfth year of his age.

It may be observed in conclusion, that Belfast is Conclusion, to Ireland what Glasgow and Liverpool are to their respective kingdoms, and it has actually been compared to these places by travellers as well in its general appearance, as in the manners and sentiments of its inhabitants. The independence which marks their public character is equalled by their readiness to meet the calls of humanity, and they need not fear in any respect of losing by such a comparison. But it would be superfluous to dwell longer on this subject, as it is hoped that the preceding account may convey an adequate notion not only of the present state of Belfast, but of its great and increasing importance.

STATISTICAL ACCOUNT
OF THE
PARISH OF BELFAST.

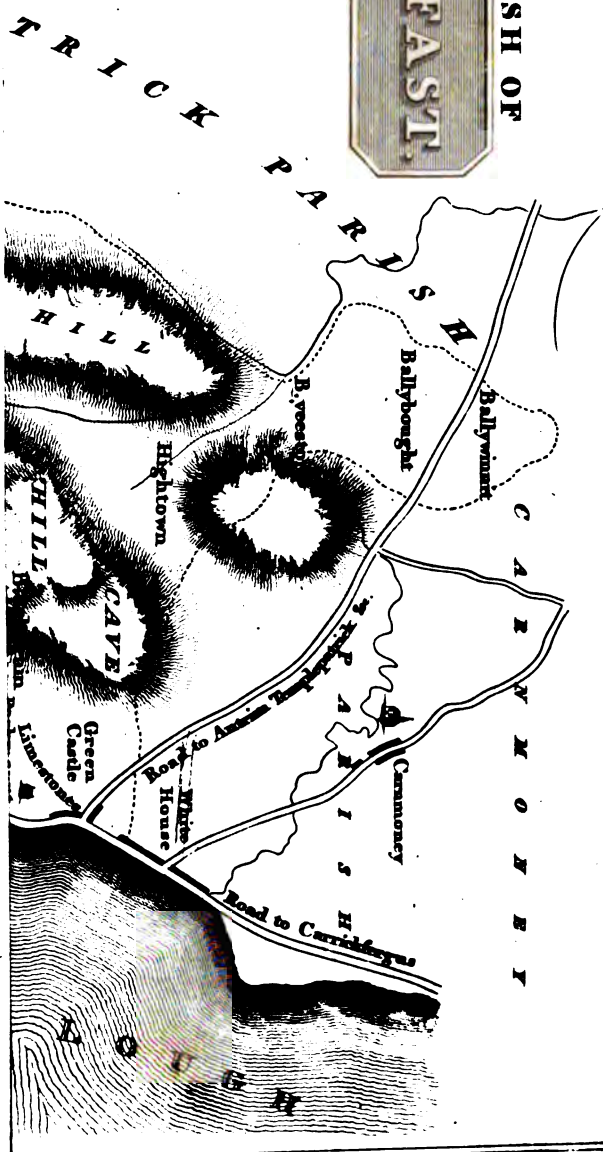
Situation, Boundaries, Extent, Climate, &c.

Situation. **THE** Parish of Belfast is situated in the county of Antrim, in the barony of Upper Belfast, and diocese of Down and Connor. It was formerly called

Name. Shankill, which signifies the Old Church; and though this name is still preserved, it is far more generally known by its present appellation, which has been gradually acquired with the increasing population and importance of the commercial town of Belfast.

Boundaries. It is bounded on the north by the parishes of Carrumoney and Templepatrick; on the east, by the bay of Carrickfergus and the river Lagan; on the south, also by the Lagan and the parish of Drum-

PARISH OF
BELFAST.



beg; and on the west, by the parishes of Derriaghy and Templepatrick. Its form is an irregular oval, extending nearly eight miles in length, and, in general, from three to four in breadth, though at the two extremities its boundaries are scarcely half a mile asunder.

Form and
Extent.

THE whole of this parish is in the estate of the Marquis of Donegall. Several of the townlands have English names, as Greencastle, Old Park; but the Irish derivations are infinitely more numerous. Of the latter, many, perhaps nearly the half of all the townlands in the parish, commence with the word *bally*, which means, in the Irish language, a town or village; and is often followed by the name of an individual, as Ballymurphy, Ballymacgarry. In other cases again, this universal term precedes some Irish epithet, expressive either of the position or appearance of the place to which it belongs, or of some striking peculiarity that it presents. This compound of *bally*, and another word or phrase, however, has most probably arisen from the circumstance of several persons, or even a single family, collecting together in particular situations in rude and barbarous times. The benefits of society and safety would lead to this; and as the practice is still continued in mountainous districts, it appears impossible to account in any other manner for the vast number of places in Ireland beginning with

Division, &c.

the term in question, in many of which, perhaps, scarcely a single house is now to be found. The townlands here are of much greater extent, but also much less valuable, towards the mountains than in the low country.

Climate.

THERE are few parts of the kingdom more subject to rain than this parish. It has been found, however, that the quantity, in the town of Belfast at least, does not exceed that which falls in some other places ; and that the gross amount arises, in general, more from the number than the violence of the showers. Though the vicinity of three large loughs is generally considered the primary cause of the frequent rains that descend here, the high mountains which the parish contains, and with which the clouds are so often in contact, have perhaps a more determinate influence. To these also must be attributed the excessive variableness of the weather at all seasons of the year. The humidity of the atmosphere, however, does not render the climate unwholesome, or unfavourable to longevity, as no diseases prevail but those which are common also to the neighbouring districts. On the contrary, the air on the mountains is pure and salubrious, which has been fully shewn by the late severe attack of typhus fever, a very small number of persons in this part of the parish having fallen victims to the contagion.

THE following table of the range of the thermometer and barometer for three years, with a register of the rain gage, will farther elucidate this subject :

| | | BAROMETER. | | | THERMOMETER. | | | RAIN GAGE. | TOTAL RAIN GAGE. |
|-------|----------------|------------|-------|-------|--------------|-------|------|------------|------------------------|
| | | HIGH. | MEAN. | LOW. | HIGH. | MEAN. | LOW. | INCHES. | |
| 1819. | January..... | 30.56 | 29.06 | 28.97 | 52 | 45.77 | 36 | 8.004* | 40.1987 |
| | February..... | 30.08 | 29.03 | 29.14 | 50 | 43.56 | 36 | 4.238 | |
| | March..... | 30.38 | 29.92 | 29.40 | 50 | 46.83 | 41 | 2.115 | |
| | April..... | 30.98 | 29.63 | 29.94 | 61 | 53.92 | 49 | 1.870 | |
| | May..... | 30.34 | 29.95 | 29.03 | 67 | 61.27 | 50 | 3.0635 | |
| | June..... | 30.35 | 29.85 | 29.39 | 70 | 62.69 | 54 | 4.0825 | |
| | July..... | 30.36 | 29.09 | 29.45 | 76 | 69. | 60 | 2.97 | |
| | August..... | 30.40 | 29.09 | 29.17 | 76 | 69.75 | 54 | 1.975 | |
| | September..... | 30.50 | 29.55 | 29.38 | 69 | 62.10 | 55 | 3.125 | |
| | October..... | 30.40 | 29.00 | 29.46 | 65 | 53.40 | 35 | 4.0250 | |
| | November..... | 30.37 | 29.82 | 29.14 | 52 | 44.40 | 33 | 2.0687† | |
| | December..... | 30.30 | 29.78 | 29.30 | 53 | 39.98 | 32 | 3.398 | |
| 1820. | January..... | 30.00 | 29.00 | 29.15 | 49 | 37.68 | 29 | 3.55 | 84.8828 |
| | February..... | 30.41 | 29.08 | 29.50 | 55 | 46.56 | 40 | 0.393 | |
| | March..... | 30.53 | 29.05 | 29.08 | 58 | 49.92 | 39 | 2.024 | |
| | April..... | 30.79 | 29.06 | 29.26 | 69 | 56.98 | 46 | 1.091 | |
| | May..... | 30.39 | 29.75 | 29.38 | 76 | 60. | 50 | 5.7785 | |
| | June..... | 30.52 | 30.05 | 29.40 | 76 | 64. | 52 | 2.9153 | |
| | July..... | 30.46 | 30.01 | 29.48 | 76 | 67.5 | 59 | 1.3182 | |
| | August..... | 30.26 | 29.97 | 29.45 | 71 | 65.25 | 59 | 5.3733 | |
| | September..... | 30.34 | 29.09 | 29.40 | 76 | 60.03 | 51 | 3.3980 | |
| | October..... | 30.73 | 29.69 | 29.64 | 61.5 | 51.67 | 46 | 2.6897 | |
| | November..... | 30.46 | 29.06 | 29.46 | 54 | 47.30 | 40 | 1.6746 | |
| | December..... | 30.53 | 30. | 29.46 | 55 | 44.98 | 34 | 4.214 | |
| 1821. | January..... | 30.83 | 29.69 | 29.03 | 54.5 | 41.03 | 30‡ | 2.0831 | 81.0804 |
| | February..... | 30.70 | 30.31 | 29.39 | 53 | 45.33 | 36 | 0.4972 | |
| | March..... | 30.33 | 29.61 | 29.10 | 55 | 46.13 | 36 | 3.8018 | |
| | April..... | 30.25 | 29.60 | 29. | 67 | 54.54 | 45 | 3.9729 | |
| | May..... | 30.33 | 29.06 | 29.33 | 64 | 57.11 | 46 | 1.4047 | |
| | June..... | 30.40 | 30.87 | 29.80 | 71.5 | 61 | 52 | .0483 | |
| | July..... | 30.36 | 29.97 | 29.42 | 72.5 | 66.1 | 60 | 1.5103 | |
| | August..... | 30.30 | 29.08 | 29.38 | 73.5 | 67 | 56 | 1.6399 | |
| | September..... | 30.25 | 29.63 | 29.35 | 73.5 | 69 | 52 | 4.8151 | |
| | October..... | 30.34 | 29.84 | 29.84 | 63.5 | 56 | 46 | 2.8738 | |
| | November..... | 30.34 | 29.37 | 28.92 | 59 | 46 | 41 | 5.1609 | |
| | December..... | 30.30 | 29.34 | 29.47 | 56 | 43 | 31 | 4.3716 | |

* On the 27th of this month the rain began at six o'clock P. M. and in seventeen hours 2.00 inches fell.

† From this period the statements are made from the returns of a new rain gage; and as the former instrument was old, it may perhaps have led to some slight incorrectness in the computations preceding the above dates.

‡ On the 4th of this month the thermometer stood at 16° at nine o'clock A. M. It is to be understood therefore, that all the heights in the foregoing table, both of the barometer and thermometer, have been taken at the same regular hour, viz. each day at two o'clock, P. M.

Soil.

THE soil of this parish is naturally fertile. That tract of country along the banks of the Lagan is most deserving of attention ; and for its uncommon beauty and fertility has not escaped observation even in a county survey. It comprehends the two townlands of Upper and Lower Malone, and consists of a ridge of low hills, commencing at Drum-bridge, the southern extremity of the parish, and terminating within about half a mile of Belfast ; bounded on one side by the vale in which the river Lagan flows, and on the other by the Falls meadows. The prevailing soil is a rich sandy loam, with a substratum of clay. They are both of a reddish tinge, and fitted, with proper knowledge, for the production of some of the best and most profitable crops which an Irish soil can possibly yield. The small gentle hills, rising in continual but irregular succession, forming the prominent and peculiar feature of this district, are not composed of the same fine sand, but of a species of coarse gravel, which is also interspersed more or less through every part of the parish. In the Falls meadows, which are low in situation, and nearer the mountains, the soil is chiefly formed of a black vegetable mould, which yet in many places approaches to the consistency of bog. This however soon disappears ; and along the base of these high hills, which extend from one end of the parish to the other, the most general characteristic of the soil is clay, not however with-

out frequent traces of that dark coloured earth which is found in the Falls. On the mountains also the clay is frequently seen, and even there it is often rich, deep, and occasionally intermixed with a strong stony gravel; but on most of them, particularly towards their summits, the light and boggy soil predominates, evidently capable, in many places, of considerable improvement.

Surface, Mountains, Mineralogy, &c.

BEFORE a proper account can be given of the general appearance and mineralogy of this parish, it will be necessary to describe its surface, together with the condition of the mountains which it contains. Its surface then might, without much inaccuracy, be compared to that of the kingdom of Scotland, as to its division into Highlands and Lowlands. The extent too occupied by each, is perhaps nearly equal, a diversity that not only renders its general appearance, in every respect, more varied, but forms the means of communicating that beauty and ruggedness for which this district is so peculiarly attractive. The lower part is a fertile and beautiful tract of country, extending along the river Lagan and the bay of Carrickfergus, the whole length of the parish. Its breadth from the Lagan to the base of the mountains is upwards of two

Surface.

miles, and from the sea to the same natural boundary, generally one mile. This, however, will perhaps be considered rather an arbitrary distinction, the ascent commencing almost from the beach, on one side, and the Falls road on the other. The surface even of this low ground presents different varieties. The townlands of Upper and Lower Malone along the river Lagan are composed of a series of gentle hills, already noticed in the description of the soil, which bestow on it a most pleasing and singular appearance. The Falls meadows, which lie nearer the mountains, are low and marshy; being in winter entirely deluged by the rains, and principally employed in raising hay, for which they are well adapted. From the appearance of this part of the parish, there is every reason to believe, that at one period it has been an inlet of the sea. Numerous banks of oyster, cockle and other marine shells, sometimes of extraordinary size, are found in these meadows. In the immediate neighbourhood of the mountains, that irregularity of surface observed at the Lagan is again perceivable; though from its inferior cultivation, it presents not the same rich and delightful scenery. The swells indeed are much larger, and continue increasing to the mountains, which at length rise very abruptly. The Black mountain is most remarkable for the abruptness of its ascent, the inequalities at Squire's hill and Mount Gilbert being rather furrows in the

lower parts of these mountains, than any characteristic of the surface. That part of the parish between the sea and the Cave hill is likewise uneven and irregular, and is bounded from the town of Belfast to Greencastle, by a steep bank twenty or thirty feet in height, which runs for this distance parallel with the bay, and is in some places only a few yards distant from it. Most of the handsome country seats along the shore are built on this bank, which extends, however, much farther than the extremity of the parish. Its origin cannot be well explained; but it is generally supposed to have been an ancient sea mark. That district bordering on the parishes of Derriaghy, Templepatrick and Carnmoney, is of very considerable elevation, being the descending ridges of the Black mountain, Glen hill and Cave hill. It partakes of all the characters of a mountainous country; and, except in that part which adjoins Carnmoney, where the fields are well cultivated, the houses substantial and comfortable, is in a much less improving condition than any other part of the parish.

THE mountains extend the whole length of the parish, forming a very extensive chain, in some places upwards of two miles in breadth. They compose the principal part of a connected line of hills, which stretches from Colin mountain to the Knockagh.

Mountains.

**Black
mountain**

The Black mountain is the most southward of these in this parish, and separated from Colin, which principally belongs to Derriaghy, by a deep and beautiful valley. It forms an unbroken range of about three miles in length, of which the highest part is 1040 feet above the level of Belfast Lough. From the northern side of this hill, after passing a level tract for upwards of a mile, there rises a sum-

Devis.

mit of considerably greater elevation, called Devis, which is 1475 feet above the sea, an altitude that is only surpassed by two mountains in this county. At the distance of a few miles the commanding height to which Devis towers above the Black mountain is very conspicuous, an effect which is not so distinctly seen on a near approach. An extensive high tract called Wolf hill connects, in a semicircular form, the northern part of Devis with the next elevation, which is denominated the Squire's hill. The road from Belfast to Antrim passes over the former of these,

Squire's hill.

which is cultivated to the top. Squire's hill is 1170 feet in height, and between it and the Cave hill is a ravine of great beauty, fertilized by one of those serpentine rivulets which nature has here so plentifully produced. Mac Arts' Fort, which is on the summit of the

Cave hill.

Cave hill, is 1064 feet above the level of the sea, though this mountain is by far the most picturesque of the whole number.

With the exception of Davis, these mountains are all in one front range, and to the mineralogist few spots, perhaps in the world, afford a greater variety of appearances within so limited a space. There is a part of Davis, called Mount Gilbert, which is nearly in a regular and corresponding line with the hills already mentioned. It is generally looked upon, however, as a continuation of that mountain, though the line of separation is very distinctly marked. The back part of the Cave hill receives the name of Colin-ward, while between it and Squire's hill stands another mountain of nearly equal elevation, called Hightown hill. Bordering on the parish of Templepatrick is a very long ridge called Glen hill. The mountains, however, which are situated in the more inland parts of the parish are entirely incapable of exciting that uncommon interest which so greatly distinguishes the north eastern sides of those that front the sea and the river. The region of rock has disappeared, and is succeeded by a soil, sometimes of dangerous softness. It is certainly, therefore, one cause of the superiority in agriculture which the former has acquired over the latter, that the limestone soil is better qualified for such improvement than the moory ground which so frequently occurs at Glen hill, and the other mountains in that direction.

Mount
Gilbert.

Hightown
hill.

Glen hill.

Appearance,
soil, &c. of
the moun-
tains.

From looking, at the map of the parish, only a very imperfect notion can be formed of the real state of the numerous mountains which it contains. In some places there are levels and vallies of very considerable extent, producing abundantly a coarse natural grass ; in other places bogs of great size and depth, which present a wild and dreary appearance. The summit of Devis is entirely composed of a deep turf bog. The Black mountain has in general a firmer surface, and is much more steep than any of the others. Squire's hill and Cave hill are more sloping in their ascent, and the former, unless where under culture, is extremely productive in a rich and valuable grass. Generally speaking, however, they are all, at least towards their summits, bleak and uncultivated. The Cave hill, when canopied by a serene and cloudless sky, is the most beautiful mountain in the parish. The wild thyme grows luxuriantly on its sides, which are neither dry nor marshy, but in most places, except where imbrowned with heath, smooth and verdant. All these mountains produce vast quantities of heath, generally of a low and bushy growth. Setting aside, however, their mineralogical attractions, and the sublime prospects which arrest the eye from their summits, the Black mountain and Devis, which are the principal, afford little else to repay for the wearisome ascent. But though they offer scarcely a single relic of antiquity, and

cannot gratify a taste for rural beauty, their soft and heathy soil, their furrows of unvarying bareness, will seem to many observers highly fruitful in serious speculation, and well deserving the attention of agricultural projectors.

* THE geological structure of this range of hills is the same with that of the whole coast of Antrim, of which it forms a continuation. From Macgilligan's promontory, near Lough Foyle, to Colin, the same rocks and mountain structure occur with little variation. Around Belfast, the best places for observation are the ravines and rocky cliffs on the hills, the banks of the small rivers which descend from them, the quarries of limestone and basalt which are wrought, and particularly the whole extent of Colin glen.

Geological
structure.

IN the following sketch of the mineralogy of this district, the various rocks and strata are described in the order in which they are *apparently* placed, one above the other, beginning from the uppermost on the summit of the hills, and proceeding downwards towards the bed of the river and lough.

I. BASALT, under various aspects, forms the top of the range, and appears as a *cap* or covering of great

Bank.

* For the information on the Mineralogy of the parish from this place to the end of the section, I am indebted to Doctor William Knight, Professor of Natural Philosophy in Belfast College.

thickness. On the Cave hill it is nearly three hundred, and on Devis about nine hundred feet in depth.

THE rocks called Basalt or Trap possess several varieties of structure, and are distinguished by different names. The most perfect and close grained Trap appears in the form of regular columns, as in one spot below the south west side of the Cave hill, where they are laid at a small angle of inclination towards the mass of the mountain, and approach in size and regularity to those at the Giants Causeway. The Greenstone of these pillars is constituted of Felspar and Hornblende. Where the columnar structure is obscure or disappears, the rock is seen in separate masses or concretions which decompose in spherical or rounded shapes like the coats of an onion, the external parts decaying first, and disclosing a harder central mass. The Iron which all basaltic rocks contain, seems to contribute to this disintegration. The soil which is thus formed is remarkable for fertility in all countries where it occurs. On the top of Squire's and Cave hill the rock is called Greystone; on the summit of Devis it is Clinkstone Porphyry. When the minerals included in the rock become numerous, the aspect changes, assumes brownish hues, and has the names of Porphyritic Greenstone and Amygdaloid. All these pass by rapid transitions into one another, and into the more

compact and purer Greenstone. On the Cave hill and Devis the chief enclosures are Calcareous spar, Arragonite, Green earth, Chalcedony, several kinds of Zeolite, particularly fibrous and pulverulent Mesotype, Analcime, cubical Zeolite or Cubicite, and more rarely Stillbite and Chabasie. The nodules of Zeolite are often so abundant on the Cave hill as to form nearly one half of the Amygdaloid. Cavities or air holes of a small size, and often lined with Green earth or minute crystallisations, are also abundant. Specimens of Mesotype of great beauty, but small, may frequently be found; and the Chalcedony is of so good a quality as to be capable of being cut into sealstones or other ornaments.

THE red clay or ochreous basalt of Doctor Richardson,* which forms so extensive beds at the grand precipices of the Giants Causeway, and which is generally supposed to be an altered basalt, is found on the Cave hill but in a sparing quantity, and generally in those thin seams which are seen in one part near the caves, and a little farther to the eastward below the Whin Dyke which there traverses the cliff. Red Clay.

* The prospect which Doctor Richardson has given of the Cave hill in the Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, vol. 9, p. 43, will be found on inspection to be altogether incorrect.

Whin Dykes.

THE Basaltic rock also occurs in this district under another aspect. Long branches proceed from the large masses of the mountains, and cutting through all the strata and beds of rock below, appear as if bursting through them, or filling up fissures or rents in their substance. These are the *Whin Dykes*, which extend in some directions for miles, and are as remarkable for their structure, as for the changes that they produce in the rocks which they traverse in so striking a manner.

MANY observations have been made upon these Dykes, of which the following are the principal :—

Principal
observations
on them.

1. THEY cut the strata at very high angles, or are almost vertical.
2. They are all nearly parallel to each other, and to those on the coast at the Giants Causeway.
3. Their bearing or direction is from south east to north west nearly.
4. The thickness of those around Belfast is from six to twenty-four feet.
5. They do not send off branches like metallic veins.
6. As they do not appear to converge, no estimate can be formed as to the depth at which they terminate.

ALTHOUGH their depth is unknown, yet some of them have been observed, on the Antrim coast, for three and four hundred feet of perpendicular height. It therefore becomes probable, that those which are

seen on both shores of Belfast Lough have a connection with those which are visible on the mountains, though from the covering of soil it is not easy to trace it. As the Whin Dykes pass through the basaltic rocks themselves; as well as through the subjacent strata; there has arisen an opinion that they are portions of a great mass of rock which is placed both below and above all the other beds, and which forms nearly the whole of the county of Antrim. But the proofs of this it is unnecessary to give in an account which is intended to describe only the principal appearances. One of the chief facts in support of it is, that the beds of limestone, clay and sandstone always dip towards the mountains, and thus on going round these, they dip towards all points of the compass.*

Where the Whin Dykes fill up rents in the basaltic rock itself, their appearance is less distinct than where they are seen cutting strata of a different substance from their own. At the Cave hill, a short distance above the cascade on the Mile water, a dyke crosses the basalt, and is recognized without difficulty in the bed of the rivulet. It splits easily into very small pillars, which are chiefly of three and four sides, and from an inch to a foot in length. This forms the most regular structure

Curious
appearance of
a dyke at the
Cave hill.

* Around Davis, Cave hill, &c. the angle of dip of the limestone is about 10° .

of dyke, and the small pillars lie in a horizontal direction.

FROM Devis three of these Dykes descend near each other into the plain below. Where they cut through the limestone, they change it from a chalky to a granular aspect, like that of loaf sugar, and render it highly phosphorescent. The flints near the junction are also altered in appearance, assuming light yellow and grey tints. These changes are seen best at Doon or Allen's ravine, on the middle of the Black mountain. On the banks of Colin water, above the glen, a Dyke passes through clay and hardens it; and a similar appearance is seen on the Forth river near Messrs. Stevenson's manufactory.

THE Whin Dykes seen on the beach between Cultra and Holywood pass through the red sandstone, and appear to be continued under the bed of the Lough to the opposite shore, near Macedon. Above Carrickfergus, on the Woodburn river, there are also two Dykes.

Wood Coal or
Surturbrand.

PIECES of Wood Coal, (Lignite or Surturbrand) have been occasionally found on the hills above Belfast, and have given rise to several attempts to discover mines of coal. Borings have been carried on at several times, but hitherto without success. The

last trial was made on the banks of the Mile water, above Jennymount. At Ballymacrevan, half way between Glenavy and Lough Neagh, two shafts were sunk to the depth of sixty feet to obtain the Wood Coal; but the design was not continued.

THIS Wood Coal is the same with that which has been quarried for some years at Port Noffer and other parts of the Giants Causeway. It is found there in seams of from two inches to five feet in thickness. The texture of the wood remains distinct, and is like that of fir. As no coal but only this altered wood has been found near Belfast, it is not probable that there is any deposit of true coal in this district. This opinion is strengthened by the existence of so large a tract of basaltic rocks, and the confinement of the limestone and sandstone strata to a comparatively small extent. The limestone, too, of this district is of a nature very different from that which has been hitherto found in connection with extended coal countries, and even in the mine at Ballycastle, the formation of true coal is local, broken, and perhaps nearly exhausted.

No deposit of true coal near Belfast.

II. THE Limestone, which is placed immediately below the basaltic rock, and in contact with it, is of a peculiar kind, and is universally acknowledged to differ from the chalk of the south of England, only by its superior hardness, while it corresponds with

Limestone.

it in other characters, and in the nature of the flints and organic remains which it contains.

Its elevation
above the sea.

THE line of junction between the Limestone and Basalt is generally irregular. The thickness of the beds of the former rock is between two and three hundred feet. The elevation of the upper part of this mass above the sea is various at different places; in Colinglen and on the eastern slope of Devis it is about 500 feet; on the Cave hill 768; on Carnmoney hill and the Knockagh, considerably lower. At the Whitehead it nearly keeps the level of the sea, and as it proceeds around the shore towards the Causeway, is seen in many spots emerging from the waves.

Its colour, &c.

THE Limestone is either perfectly white or very slightly tinged with yellow. Thin veins of calcareous spar traverse its substance, and are most frequent in the lower beds. Small nodules of iron pyrites are a rarer occurrence, but the most remarkable enclosure is a great number of nodules of flint, which are arranged in regular horizontal beds, placed at distances generally between two and three feet from each other. In the lowest beds very few flints are observed; in the highest they are most abundant, and at the top or junction are collected together in a confused manner along with the red clay or ochre, which forms the bottom of the basaltic rocks.

The flints are of the usual appearance, mostly of dark grey and black colours. Where the Whin Dykes pass near them, they assume light yellow and ash-coloured tints. Many of a fine red hue are also found, chiefly in the beds that are nearest the top. Others are distinguished by peculiar shapes, indicating that they have existed formerly as organic Mollusca, chiefly of the genus *Alcyonia*. The largest nodules, known by the name of *Paramoudra*,* are from ten to twenty-four inches in length, and have also been supposed to be an organic remain, particularly from the mode in which they are seen connected in a quarry near Moira, where they are arranged in a kind of chain. The chief organic remains in the limestone quarries around Belfast are the following, most of which occur also in the flints:—*Belemnites* of the true kind, very common, and mostly petrified by calcareous spar, more rarely by flint. *Echinus scutatus*, and *E. cidaris mamillata*. *Terebratula vulgaris*, and *T. sulcata*. *Ammonites*, rare, but of very large size.

Chief organic
remains in
the limestone.

III. THE Limestone rests on the Mubatto, a rock of which the constitution is much varied in different parts. It is generally a congeries of grains of sand in a cement of the white limestone, having disseminated through its substance many small

Mubatto.

* The derivation of this word is unknown. The workmen in the quarries give them the expressive name of *wig Nocks*.

specks of green earth. But the siliceous matter is sometimes not a tenth part of the rock ; while in other places, large nodules of quartz give it the aspect of a conglomerate or plumpudding stone. It is often traversed by compressed veins of calcareous spar, and may be found in beds of various thickness. It is seen best in Colin glen and at White-well quarry.

Corresponds
with the
green Sand-
stone of
England,

THE Mulatto corresponds with the green sandstone found in England under the chalk.* It contains many enclosed fossils, among which the following are found in Colin Glen :—*Belemnites*, *Ostrea Crista Galli*, *Ostrea Edulis*, *Arca Glycimeris*, *Pecten Varia*, *Anomia Gryphus*, *Mytilus Crista Galli*, *Mytilus Lithophagus*, *Dentalium hexangulum* ; and some unascertained species of *Echinus*, *Venus*, and *Cardium*.

Blueish
Limestone.

IV. THE last bed rests immediately on a coarse blueish limestone, impregnated with much clay, and alternately with thin strata of slate clay. The thickness of the whole is variable, and in Colin glen, where the best section of it may be seen, is in one place nearly thirty feet. It is the same rock which in England receives the name of Lias Limestone. At Colin glen the fissures in it sometimes contain the substance called mountain leather, a variety of

* The name of Mulatto is derived from its speckled appearance.

Asbestos. It abounds in petrifications, particularly Ammonites and Gryphites, which, with the remains of joints of Pentacrinites, often constitute a very great part of its slaty texture.

Abounds
with petrifica-
tions.

V. UNDER the Lias Limestone, and lower down, on the banks of the Colin, Forth, and Mile water rivers, are found thick beds of red and variegated **Marle**, containing much clay, and including beds of gypsum or sulphat of lime. The latter always occurs in the form of alabaster, often of a delicately white fibrous structure, and sometimes in perfectly transparent crystals, or Selenite. The beds of clay vary in the vicinity of Belfast from forty to one hundred feet in thickness. Salt springs occur in them, particularly near Carrickfergus; but no strata of rock salt have been found.

Marle.

Alabaster.

VI. THE rock which appears lowermost is **Sandstone**, of which the general colour is reddish, often varied with grey tints, and containing layers and round masses of clay. The thickness of the Sandstone is considerable. It has been pierced for wells to the depth of eighty or a hundred, and for coals to five hundred feet. It may be considered as the rock which forms the greater part of the valley, both of the Lough below Belfast, and of the river above as far as Moira. In the hill of Scrabo, this Sandstone is

Sandstone.

wrought extensively at the White Quarry, where the layers of clay often bear impressions like those of compressed reeds. From this intermixture of a softer substance the stone becomes of inferior quality.*

Alluvial
strata.

VII. WHERE the other strata appear near the surface, they are covered by beds of Alluvial materials, which are chiefly a coarse gravel. For some miles on the banks of the Lagan, particularly above and below Shaw's bridge, these present undulations of remarkable depth and steepness which give rise to beautiful varieties of scenery.

Hazel nuts.

ON the shore of Belfast Lough, particularly near Carrickfergus, are found numbers of hazel nuts, of which the kernels are changed into calcareous spar, while the woody substance of the shells remains unaltered. They do not differ in appearance from recent nuts. They are found in connection with turf, and have been supposed to indicate the remains of

* It has been doubted whether the sandstone in the county of Down be the same with that on the Antrim side. The sandstone of Scrabo, however, can be traced to Newtownards, and is evidently of the same nature with that of the valley of the Lagan. On the Down side, it extends to Holywood and Cultra; on the Antrim to Woodburn, and as far as Castle Chichester in Island Magee. Any attempts, however, which have hitherto been made to quarry this valuable stone in the Belfast mountains have not been prosecuted. The last trial was made at Ringan's Point, on the shore of the lough, nearly two miles from Belfast, only about a year ago, but it has since been given up.

an ancient forest, submerged at a former era like those lately explored on the coasts of Lincoln and Somerset shires.

IN the alluvial soil around Belfast no remains of the ancient elk, so common in other parts of Ireland, have yet been discovered, as far as is known.

THE general nature of the Down side of the environs of Belfast may be briefly stated. The chief rock in that county extends over large tracts, and receives the name of Grey Wacke, and when slaty, as it frequently is, of Grey Wacke shistus. The latter covers a great part of the Ards and Castle-reagh; and when easily separated into thin plates, is wrought extensively for roofing slate. At Cultra a coarse variety of drawing slate, and flint slate, occurs in this rock, along with a limestone, containing magnesia. Sulphuret of lead, accompanied by white Sulphate of Barytes, is found at Conliff hill, between Bangor and Newtownards, and a mine was wrought there but has been long abandoned.

Geological
nature of the
Down side of
the Lough.

THE Lagan forms a pretty exact boundary between these different beds of rock, in the counties of Down and Antrim. Some Grey Wacke shistus is however found on the western banks of that river; and on the other side Scrabo is a basaltic eminence of 493 feet in height, where the Greenstone which is

seen on the top, and for one hundred and fifty feet on its slope, does not differ from that on the Antrim mountains, although the hills immediately around it are of Grey Wacke slate. A large Whin Dyke from the basaltic rock of Scrabo, cuts the sandstone in the quarry below, presenting appearances similar to those which have been already described.*

Villages, Houses, Roads, Bridges, Waters, &c.

Villages.

EXCEPT Belfast, this parish contains no towns or villages of any consequence. There are indeed several straggling hamlets, which, in other situations, might merit particular attention, but in this populous district, where some of the roads are almost continued streets, they can scarcely be considered worthy of a very minute account. When these houses, however, are more than usually contiguous, they may properly be termed villages, and as such must not be omitted. On the Carrickfergus road, about three miles from Belfast, is a village called Whitehouse, remarkable as the place where King William and Duke Schomberg met in 1690; and distinguished at present by an appearance of uncommon industry and comfort, greatly to be attributed to the exten-

* The only information, it is probable, which can be added to the foregoing scientific account of the Geology of Belfast parish and its neighbourhood, is to notice the traces of manganese discovered some time ago near Dunmurry. The place was examined by several scientific gentlemen, and wrought for some time. It was found, however, to be of an impure quality, though, perhaps, it is still worthy, and will probably be the subject, of future perseverance.

sive cotton print works in its neighbourhood. Whitehouse contains a Lancasterian school, but being just at the limits of this parish, belongs with the exception of a very few houses to that of Carnmoney. Less than a quarter of a mile nearer Belfast, and on the same road, is another village of smaller extent, but still deserving some notice on account of the vast quantity of limestone which is conveyed from it both to Scotland and the opposite coast of Down. The place is called the Limestones, significant of this circumstance. On the Shankill or Antrim road, and at the distance of one mile from Belfast, there is a collection of thirty or forty cabins, which may however be nearly considered a suburb of the town, being now almost united to it by the great number of houses which have been lately built between the two places. A cluster of very neat and comfortable cottages on the Falls road has received the name of Anderson's Town, forming in its appearance a striking contrast with the village of Hannahstown, which is situated five miles from Belfast, in the valley between the Black mountain and Colin. This place, which contains a small Roman Catholic Chapel, was till lately an assemblage of wretched cabins; but it is now, as well as the adjacent land, undergoing great and rapid improvements. In different parts of the parish, especially towards the mountains, there will be found many groups of cottages, often in lonely and picturesque

situations, too insignificant to have acquired names, and too numerous to be here particularised. The numerous bleach greens and cotton works in the vicinity of Belfast are generally surrounded with houses, for the convenience of those who are employed in them. Many of these are of very considerable extent, greatly contributing to the populous and thriving appearance of those parts of the country in which they occur.

Houses of the
Gentry.

THE wealth and importance of the gentry of this parish may very justly be inferred from the number of handsome country seats which it contains. These are most numerous on the road which runs close by the bay from Belfast to Carrickfergus ; and which presents, on both sides, objects of great and varied attraction. They are all built upon commanding eminences, and from their situation, from the planting, and other improvements with which they are surrounded, add much to the beauty of one of the most admired districts in this county. The finest house on this road, or perhaps in the parish, is Parkmount, built by the late Mr. Cairns, on or near the site of a residence, or hunting lodge, formerly belonging to the Donegall family. Low Wood, Mr. Robinson's ; Mount Vernon, the late Mr. Adair's ; Fort William, Mr. Langtry's ; Grove, Mr. Simms ; Greenmount, Mr. Bell's, are likewise extremely conspicuous, as much for their beauty as for the fine

and ornamental situations in which they are built, many of the proprietors having displayed very great taste both in their houses and enclosures. On the New Lodge Road, there are three fine houses, but rather in a confined extent; Old Park, Mr. Lyons'; —, Mr. Crawford's; Lodge, Mr. Magee's. On the Shankill or Antrim road there are also several country seats well deserving observation. The principal are Wheatfield, Mr. Blair's; and Glenbank, Mr. Grogan's. The proprietors of the several bleachgreens and cotton works in the parish have most frequently houses attached to them. This is the case on the Falls, where Springfield, Mr. Stevenson's; Suffolk, Mr. M'Cance's, and Glenville, the late Mr. Stouppe's, are particularly observable, as much for the appearance of the edifices, as the number of outhouses, (chiefly employed in the preparation of linen or cotton,) and the many other striking improvements which surround them. Though the houses on the Malone road are perhaps scarcely so numerous, nor the views so varied as those on the Shore, the richness of the country, and the superior cultivation, make up the deficiency. On the latter, the houses are built in the modern style; but in Malone, if we may judge from the outward appearance, at least of some of them, and their long straight avenues, they must have been standing a considerable time. The following, how-

ever, are in general new, and most to be admired for their extent and elegance: Strandmills, Mr. Black's; New Forge, Mr. Russel's; Malone House, Mr. Legge's; Ballydrain, Mr. Younghusband's; and on the Falls, Beechmount, Mr. Vance's.* With respect, however, to the houses, it must be mentioned, that although those which have been selected are certainly the principal, all the roads in the neighbourhood of Belfast, both public and private, display a succession of country residences evincing more or less taste and beauty, but affording ample proofs, not only of the wealth of this great commercial and manufacturing parish, but of the manner in which that wealth is often and properly employed.

Farmhouses,
&c.

THE farm-houses in this place partake of the comfort so perceivable and so gratifying in those of the

* Cranmore, Mr. Templeton's, is remarkable as being most probably the oldest house in the parish, having been built, it is said, in the reign of Elizabeth. It is one of the places at which King William stopped in his route through this country; and though it is generally thought that he remained here a night, there is no positive tradition, or other testimony, to countenance this opinion. It is, however, by no means impossible, as, until very lately, a bed of a gorgeous and stately appearance was shown, and said to have been that on which the King reposed. Mr. Eccles, the owner of the house at that time, and the great grandfather of Dr. Black, the celebrated chemist, on being asked what compensation he would accept for his hospitality, resigned any favour of this kind to his son, who was accordingly presented with a considerable situation in the Custom House of Dublin. The only relic which is now preserved of the royal visit, is a jug of earthen ware of antique workmanship, out of which the King drank.

gentry. They are usually low, and thatched with straw, but at the same time white, clean and commodious. Those in Malone, which are chiefly occupied by the descendants of English settlers, are particularly admired for their extreme beauty and neatness. Many of them are accompanied with small gardens or orchards, and certainly form one of the principal attractions of a district which is possessed of many great, but almost indescribable charms. Though the appearance of the houses along the public road will prove, in most cases, the truth of such statements, the private roads in Upper and Lower Malone, in the neighbouring parish of Drumbeg, and in great part of Derriaghy, are inhabited by a race of people, denoting not only in the appearance of their habitations, and in their names, a different origin from their neighbours, but inheriting a marked disposition for cleanliness and comfort, which forms one of the best and most distinguishable characteristics in the peasantry of a country. Whether it is to be attributed to the influence of this example, it is certain that many parts of the Falls, as well as the other districts in the vicinity of Malone, display abundant proofs of similar inclinations. There are great numbers of farm houses in these places, which, for neatness and even elegance, might probably be put in competition with any other dwellings, occupied by the same class of people in the

most improved part of these kingdoms. Much of this is certainly to be ascribed to that taste for planting which has become so general ; but due praise must also be given to the desire so strongly manifested of enjoying, together with personal comfort, the admiration of the passing traveller. Though the farm houses in the higher parts of the parish generally assume a less inviting aspect, there are many along the base of the mountains which would lose nothing by comparison. They also are white, clean, and well enclosed ; and the proprietors of such houses always appear to be in a more prosperous condition than their less careful neighbours.

Cottages.

UNDER the head of cottages are included the houses of those who labour for the more extensive farmers. These are numerous, and few, or none of them, at least in the low country, in so miserable a condition as those which are frequently to be found even in this county. On the mountains, indeed, they are often wretched hovels, but in Malone and the other improved parts of the parish, equal in many instances, except in point of size, the farm houses already described. Some of them are formed of clay, but these are old ; for in this parish, where stones are so extremely plentiful, the use of such a material for building has been entirely abandoned. They, therefore, who form their opinion of all Ireland from the accounts which have been written of

the wretched abodes of the peasantry in the south, where one apartment will accommodate a swarm of miserable inmates, with a pig or a cow, if rich enough to possess such a treasure, and one entrance serve for the admission of the pure air, and the egress of the curling smoke, will experience a complete, no doubt a pleasing disappointment, to find here not only a total reverse among the most indigent cottagers, but in the farm houses a nearer approach to the condition of those in a neighbouring kingdom, occupied by that great bulwark of the state, the yeomanry of England, than any other part of this country it is probable can exhibit. It is also proper to remark, that the houses of every kind are so blended, that it might, in many cases, be difficult to ascertain to which of the foregoing classes any one in particular should properly be referred. The cottager of this district might boast of a better habitation than the farmer of another parish, and the farmer might display a prouder mansion than many who receive the title of country squires.

Few places in Ireland contain finer roads than Roads. this parish, whether we consider their original structure, the excellent repair in which they are kept, or the beautiful scenery with which they are adorned. The Malone or Lisburn road is most distinguished for all these excellencies. Not being sufficiently level, however, for general convenience, or the in-

creasing trade of the country, a new road, which completely obviates these disadvantages, has lately been made between Belfast and Lisburn. It is nearer the mountains than the former, and continues almost three miles within the limits of this parish. The Carrickfergus or Shore road, which runs along the bay, is likewise, in every respect, extremely commodious. The Falls and Shankill roads (at least so far as they extend in this parish) are also, though near the mountains, fine and spacious. They are all furnished with footways, an accommodation, which, though of late introduction, yields to none in point of utility. For the excellent condition in which these roads are kept, we are, in a great measure, indebted to those extensive quarries of whin stone found near the mountains, than which a better or more durable substance could not possibly be procured. A kind of slaty stone was formerly used for this purpose, which from its softness frequently rendered the roads in winter almost impassable. No such inconvenience attends the whin stone, so that it is now justly and universally preferred.* The private roads in the lower parts of the parish are composed of the same material, and are equally serviceable. Though those on the mountains, too, have

* This account must seem the more striking, when it is known, that so lately as the year 1787, on an application for the establishment of a mail coach between Belfast and Dublin, an answer was returned, that such a design, in the present state of the roads, would be impracticable.

similar advantages, their steepness renders them less capable of improvement, and they remain, and perhaps will long continue, rugged and irregular.

THERE is scarcely any full grown timber in this parish, but a vast quantity of young plantation. It preserves, however, several evident proofs that it was once, particularly the mountains, overgrown with trees. Remains of such a kind are occasionally found in the bogs, and many of the old inhabitants remember groves of considerable extent, where not a vestige of such at present exists. It is not many years since there was a large plantation of old ash trees at the Deer Park on the Cave hill. There was formerly an extensive wood, principally consisting of oaks, reaching from May's market, in Belfast, to the Lagan, and along the bank of that river to the present New Bridge.* The gentry here have a great and laudable desire for planting; in consequence of which the parish is extremely well stocked with young and flourishing trees. In the low country, there is scarcely a house, even among those which might be considered as belonging to the inferior classes of the people, which is not protected or embellished, more or less, with the tall ash or the humble willow; and the inhabitants of all ranks seem to

Wood.

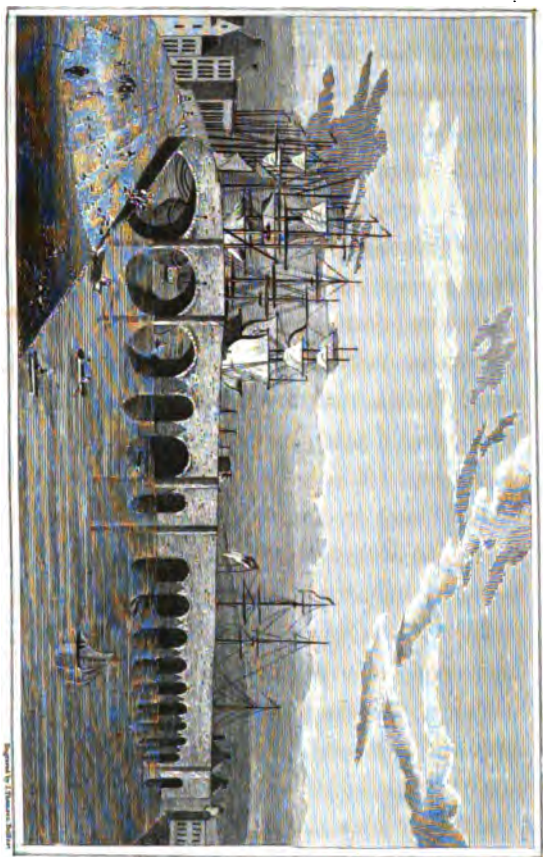
* Many of the old inhabitants recollect this wood, which was principally remarkable for the great number of swans which built their nests in it.

be fully sensible of the advantages of a system which unites usefulness with ornament. With the farmers in the mountainous parts of the parish, there are too many exceptions to this ; a much greater number undoubtedly than in the course of a few years may justly be anticipated.

Bridges.

Long or Great Bridge of Belfast.

THE most important article under the head of bridges is the celebrated Long Bridge of Belfast. Its foundation was laid in 1682 ; but, on account of the war, and other causes, it was not entirely finished for several years after that time. In 1689, the bridge was much weakened by Duke Schomberg's cannon being drawn over it ; seven of the arches fell in 1692 ; and a few years after it was farther injured by a ship which was violently driven against the piers. After having undergone proper repairs, and to prevent the recurrence of this last accident, an order was issued by the corporation of Belfast, that no vessel should lie at anchor to the southward of the dock, and that such as were stationed north of it should be well moored, on pain of a penalty of forty shillings each tide. The Long Bridge cost, according to some accounts, £7000 ; but from other statements the expence of its erection is made to amount to £12,000. It has been conjectured, that this latter sum includes the rebuilding of the seven arches. Its length is 2562 feet, 1722 of which are dead work. The number of arches is twenty-one. Se-



LONG BRIDGE.

veral of these have been closed, and the others are extremely unequal in size. Very considerable sums have at different times been laid on the county for keeping in repair the "Great Bridge of Belfast," as it is styled in the Grand Jury Book.* From whatever cause it has arisen also, great doubts have long been entertained and expressed as to its stability. In the year 1744, Mr. Harris speaks of the injuries which it had sustained from the winter floods, and the danger which attended several large chasms in the arches. By another surveyor in 1817 a similar account was made of its dilapidated condition, and a very general belief of its insecurity was occasioned. From a still later examination, however, it was reported that these statements were incorrect, and that more danger is to be apprehended from the extreme narrowness of this bridge, (which is only twenty-two feet wide) than from any other cause. To remedy this inconvenience, it was proposed that a rail way on each side for foot passengers should be made. The committee appointed by the respective grand juries for carrying this design into effect made a report, that it would be expedient to postpone such an improvement for a

* From the same authority it appears, that there were formerly stairs at the Long Bridge. In 1712, when mentioning several alterations, it is added; "and that the stairs, or landing place, on the north side of the west end of the said bridge be preserved, as they were built at the charge of the two countys, as they now stand, with liberty to repair the same, in like manner as the side walls aforesaid."

time ; but that the other repairs, such as raising the pavement and strengthening the arches, should be proceeded on. It seems, however, to be the more general opinion, that a new bridge is required, and various statements and arguments have been brought forward in the public papers to shew the necessity of such a measure. Two plans, one for £17,000 and the other for £23,000, have been submitted to the public, and from the comparatively reasonable nature of these estimates, it is probable that a new and more elegant structure may shortly be erected, as those who have the power are understood to have taken the subject into their consideration.

New Bridge.

THE New Bridge also crosses the Lagan at Cro-mac, about a mile from Belfast, and has not been standing more than eight years. It consists of seven arches, and presents from a distance rather a handsome appearance. It was very tedious in the construction, several arches, at different periods, having fallen ; and another bridge, which stood in the same place, fell altogether some years ago.

Shaw's Bridge.

SHAW'S Bridge likewise crosses the Lagan three miles from Belfast, and is much stronger than those which are commonly found on private roads. This bridge is of some antiquity, and was built with the ruins of an old castle in the neighbourhood. There

is also a traditional account, that it was carried away by a great flood in the year 1709.

BESIDES these there are several others of less importance. There is one of three arches over the Blackstaff, on the Malone road, near Belfast; another on the same river at the Paper Mill; three or four on the Falls, and several on the Carrickfergus and Shankill roads. The Salt-water bridge in Sandy Row, Belfast, is, perhaps, the oldest in the parish. So early as the year 1717, a presentment was made by the Grand Jury, for building buttresses "to support the Salt-water bridge, near Belfast, and for other repairs about the said bridge."

Salt-water
Bridge, &c.

THIS parish is extremely well watered, both for beauty and for use. The Lagan forms its south east boundary, and, as far as that boundary extends, is navigable, with the assistance of five small canal cuts. Near the town of Belfast this river is of very considerable breadth; in one place, upwards of 1800 feet across, but more frequently, rather less than half that distance. Its breadth is contracted beside the town by extensive embankments on both sides; but at high water, the appearance of the Lagan is extremely spacious and ornamental. The banks are low, and the stream itself is smooth and silent in its course.

Rivers.

Lagan.

Though this river runs almost thirty miles, its breadth, except near Belfast, is not very great, and beyond this parish the canal cuts soon become more numerous and capacious.

Mountain
Streams.

THE other rivers in the parish are inconsiderable ; but from their situation, and their number, are not less useful than the Lagan. They all descend from the mountains in rapid, broken, and meandering courses ; being of incalculable utility, either in draining or irrigating the land, but more especially in conveying water to the mills and manufactories which such streams always attract to their banks. The number of bleach greens near the mountains, and the artificial channels which diverge from these rivulets, are sufficient proofs of that industry and wealth which they are the means of diffusing. In winter they are much swelled with the rains, but in summer often completely dry. The principal of these rivers are the Colin, or the Rumbling-burn water, the Blackstaff, the Milewater, and the Forth. These all rise in the mountains, and fall either into the Lagan, or the bay of Carrickfergus, near the town of Belfast. The main branches are increased with numerous tributary streams, all partaking of the same bold features, consisting of banks, on many occasions, remarkable for their height and steepness ; in some places, com-

posed of clay, and in others, of firm or friable rocks.

TERRA are very few lakes in this parish, and none of any great magnitude. There is one in Malone, opposite Wilmonnt, which appears to be partly natural and partly artificial. It contains three small islands, and, though not large, is a considerable ornament to the road which it immediately adjoins. Lakes.

Of the **Lagan** navigation, there is a very important part, which may properly be considered as belonging to this parish, the different windings of the river, from the town of Belfast to Drumbriggs, making a course of about six Irish miles. The five canal cuts, where the river was found too shallow or irregular for the purposes of navigation, form scarcely a seventh part of that distance. The impropriety in substituting any portion of a river for a canal has been often explained, and the effects of so great an error as frequently experienced, so that it was in contemplation for many years to make an entire new cut between Belfast and Lough Neagh, the advantages of which would, it is thought, overbalance the immense difficulties and expense with which it would be attended. It is probable, however, that any great alteration in this respect is at present distant ; for this navigation, whatever may be its disadvantages, is now, and has been, for se- Lagan Navigation.

veral years past, in a state of progressive improvement. The Lagan is too small a river for the application of that great invention of modern times, the propulsion of ships by steam; but the steam vessel lately built near Lough Neagh, and now in full operation on that noble sheet of water, will, no doubt, materially add to the importance and utility of this navigation.

Its commencement.

THE works for opening a communication from Belfast to Lough Neagh were begun so early as the year 1754; but until 1809, the country derived no advantage from what should have been one of the principal sources of internal prosperity. At its commencement, a large grant was made by the Irish parliament; ten thousand pounds were advanced by the late Marquis of Donegall and others, as a loan; and an act passed for defraying the remaining cost, by duties on beer and spirits, manufactured or brought into certain parts of Lisburn excise district. These funds, however, were found inadequate to finish and keep in repair a canal of the proposed extent; so that an act was made in 1779, when a considerable part of the work was done, for incorporating those who had advanced or who should advance money into a company, and thus holding out the prospect of a profitable speculation. The late Marquis of Donegall contributed £62,000 for this purpose, which finished the canal from the

Union Locks to Lough Neagh. But even these exertions were insufficient to complete the undertaking. The works were kept in bad repair, and exposed, in an unfinished state, to all the injuries of the weather. In 1868, however, a number of individuals purchased a considerable part of Lord Donnegall's interest in this navigation, and subscribed large sums to render it of public and permanent advantage. Since that time, upwards of £20,000 have been expended in judicious improvements. A track way for horses has been made along a great part of the canal, and the trade is now rising in importance and estimation. The receipts arise from the tolls; and a duty of four pence per gallon on spirits under the regulation already mentioned, that on beer having been discontinued. The principal trade is from Belfast to Lisburn and Lough Neagh, fourteen hours being the usual time for lighters to pass to the former, and thirty to the latter place, where they are taken in tow by the steam boat, and enabled to convey with rapidity and safety the productions of other countries to the different towns which lie along its shores.

Its present
improving
state.

Scenery, Natural Curiosities, &c.

From the account which has been given of the superficial appearance of this parish, the beauty and variety of its scenery may be readily conceived. To

Scenery
of Malone.

a stranger, the Malone district will appear the most inviting. The excellence of the road, the improved state of cultivation, the elegance of one class of houses, and the cleanliness of another, together with the planting and improvements of various kinds with which both are surrounded, unite in forming a scene which is truly enticing for its rural charms. The ground which is decked with this assemblage of striking objects possesses a complete and curious medium, between a dull and unchanging flatness and a rocky or mountainous surface. It resembles the waves of the sea ; not the broken and tempestuous billows of the ocean, but its regular and gentle undulations. Nothing is abrupt, or waste, or unproductive. No part is too elevated to be arid, nor too low to be marshy. Trees and cottages are profusely mingled with waving corn, on every hill and in every valley, so that it may with truth be said, that art has chosen the same place to exert her power which nature before had selected. Travellers, indeed, never fail to express their admiration, sometimes their surprise, at the soft and delightful scenery of the country between Lisburn and Belfast. Its beauties may, doubtless, be increased or diminished by the collateral embellishments of times or seasons. The luxuriant autumn of this beautiful country cannot but awaken the most pleasing reflections, and the eye can rest upon no

object which will impede the progress of such thoughts. But, whether it be the lively verdure of spring, or the resplendent glow of summer, the rural landscape is still complete, and the expressive images of one of the greatest of our descriptive poets, live and move before the sight. Such impressions cannot be transient when the objects are present ; and though the effect may soon be forgotten by those who are contented with a cold and calculating inspection, the dreariness of winter can never obliterate it from the minds of those, who have learned to relish the rich and genuine beauties of rustic scenery. Let it not be thought that exaggeration has any share in this. Even so early as the year 1635, the progress of the district now described was so considerable, as not to have escaped the attention of a cursory traveller of that distant period, who has taken the liberty of calling it a paradise, in comparison with every part of Scotland. Since that time it has been the most forward in improvement, and its outward appearance at present is such as to excite the most unmixed gratification. The scenery of several private roads between the Falls and Malone is a renewal of the same objects, and must be enthusiastically admired by every lover of rural beauty. Where there is little extremely prominent ; where the whole is one extended view, uniformly rich and beautiful, description must be confined to general terms, and even the magic touches

of the pencil would be insufficient to represent the fair and goodly scene.

Of the Black
mountain.

THAT part of the parish which lies between the Black mountain and Malone is equally gratifying to the eye. The finely enclosed fields which compose the Falls meadows are quickly passed over to contemplate the bolder and gradually ascending surface. The base of the hill appears studded with houses and clumps of trees, while the numerous and successful efforts to reclaim from barrenness the steep sides of the mountain, argue strongly for the increasing industry and perseverance of those who inhabit that quarter of the parish. The Black mountain, however, soon becomes, at least in the part now described, sterile and perpendicular, bidding defiance to the efforts of cultivation. Though its general aspect is dark and rugged, which is increased by the great lateral ravines that traverse its surface, it possesses an appearance of uncommon interest from the multitudinous spots of a brighter hue which the revolving seasons produce, and from the whiteness of the immense lime quarries which industry has formed, and may continue to use for ages yet to come.

Of the Shore
road.

THE scenery of the Shore road has more boldness and variety, but not so much rural beauty as Malone. The most conspicuous objects are

the majestic precipices of the Cave hill, which may be seen to great advantage. This is the only place in the parish on which the basalt is bared to any great extent, and it presents, in common with the other mountains which run along the bay of Carrickfergus, that singular disposition of rising gradually from the land side, and breaking off with abrupt and perpendicular rocks towards the sea. Of these the rocky side of Mac Art's Fort, which, jutting out from all the rest, forms a sharp and insulated projection, is the most striking. The whole of them, however, form a remarkable contrast with the peaceful fields and cottages which encircle their base. This road has also other recommendations. The numerous villas on one side, and the spacious bay of Carrickfergus, with its many accompanying attractions, on the other, create a fresh and perpetual variety.

On the Falls and Shankill roads, the scene is equally pleasing. Bleach greens and mills are intermixed with the white-washed cottages, and all the busy marks of a wealthy, populous, and thriving district follow in rapid succession. If we leave the public roads, and enter upon those which diverge from the Shankill and the Falls, our admiration will be called forth by similar objects. In these respects, there are several places worthy of particular obser-

Of the Falls
and Shankill
roads.

vation. The appearance of the houses and the people round the village of Dunmurry, which is just on the borders of the parish, containing an extensive flour mill and bleach green, bespeak nothing of indolence or poverty. The same is the case on the lower part of that road which leads through Hannahstown, and of the numerous and beautiful cottages here, there is probably not one, the owner of which is not concerned in the extensive bleach works which every side presents. In these instances it is undoubtedly the manufactures which give impulse to their exertions, and which surround their dwellings with comfort.

BUT if, in surveying the scenery of this parish, the beaten track be altogether forsaken, many objects worthy of admiration will present themselves to the view at the foot of the mountains. If the Cave hill have an abrupt summit, none of the requisites so indispensable in rural scenery are wanting at its base; possessing, in such a place, charms of which they would be deprived in any other situation. The lower part of the Black mountain, at Ballygomartin and the neighbouring townlands, is also particularly attractive. This mountain, in some other places so unproductive, is here green and sloping, with fields and trees rapidly increasing in height. It is in this part of the parish, too, may be seen in their greatest beauty, the mountain rivulets

Scenery and general appearance of the mountain rivers.

formerly mentioned. Their steep banks are covered with brushwood or natural shrubs, and their murmuring course incessantly interrupted by small, irregular torrents. The banks of the Forth river, in many places, are stupendous ; sometimes of rocks, black, hard, and precipitous ; more frequently of red clay, often but partially concealed by shrubs and brambles that nature has produced, but which the hand of man may yet eradicate for nobler tenants. The very bed of the Forth, as also of the Colin river, is in some places a rock of whin stone, in which situation it admirably displays the regularity of its formation. In other places, the course of the stream is choked by the unconnected stones or masses, which have fallen from the impending heights. These banks are often composed also of crumbling limestone, and oblique rocks, thrown together apparently without order or design, and sometimes perpendicular, sometimes shelving, they follow the winding course of the stream which they enclose ; and their height renders it strange, to some perhaps incredible, how they could have been worn by so inconsiderable a river.

Of such a nature are the banks which form Colin glen. They belong to the river of the same name, and are planted from the Falls road towards the mountains for the space of two miles. The stream is shallow, but of considerable breadth, and this

Colin Glen.

place certainly unites more natural, as well as artificial beauty, than any of the other mountain rivers. The banks on many occasions must be more than two hundred feet in height, overspread with young and flourishing trees. It is by far the most extensive plantation in the parish; and the view of this part of the glen from some elevated points is eminently beautiful. The high and shelving banks are covered with such a mass of leaves and branches, that the rivulet below seems embosomed in green. For the last quarter of a mile, however, these banks assume a very different aspect. They are formed of rocks, generally perpendicular and inaccessible, often overhanging their base, in many places crumbling to pieces and rent with fissures. Dependant on the windings of the stream, they often form, on this account, the resemblance of vast amphitheatres, crowned with low shrubs, and excluding from the bed of the river, because of their height and circuitousness, the view of every distant object but the ethereal sky. To the geologist, this place is one of the most curious in our island, and to all it must appear grand and impressive. The innumerable little cascades which have hollowed in their fall for ages deep cavities; the confusion of rocks and shrubs which prevail; the towering banks; the view which in some spots may be caught of the circumjacent mountains; and the solitude which generally reigns in this beautiful glen, altogether form a

scene, which is capable of exciting the most intense and lively interest.

AFTER the copious account which has been given of the mineralogy of this parish, it can scarcely be expected that any natural productions of much importance remain to be mentioned. The most remarkable curiosities, indeed, are the numberless petrifications which are found imbedded in the rocks, particularly in those that confine the Colin river. They are so extremely abundant, that this place has acquired great celebrity, being always visited by strangers who have inclination for such pursuits. The marine exuvæ and organic remains found in the Mulatto at the Black mountain, are also not less numerous than wonderful. They consist not only of shells, but of various kinds of bones ; some, perhaps, the remains of terrestrial animals, but often, likewise, of an uncertain origin,

Natural
curiosities.

THERE are no waterfalls of any considerable size in this parish. The highest is situated near the source of the Milewater, and on the western side of the Cave hill. The water accumulates on the mountain, and at length overflows into a most abrupt and tremendous ravine. The lower part of this cascade, which is completely perpendicular, is upwards of thirty feet in height. The whole extent, however, which the water falls would be found more

Cascade on
the Mile-
water.

than double that distance, but the upper part is much less regular than the lower. The breadth of the stream is very trifling ; though in winter it forms a large and foaming torrent, which may be heard at a considerable distance. The water falls into a kind of rocky gulf ; the banks on each side are extremely high and steep, concealing the mountains and the surrounding country entirely from the view.

The rumbling
hole.

At the top of Colin glen is a small waterfall, projected from the rock in two different streams which cross each other at the bottom. They fall into a deep, or, according to the opinion of the country people, an unfathomable well imbedded in rocks ; beside which, and above a well of a similar kind, supplied by another waterfall, there are about a dozen holes hollowed out of the solid stone. They are completely circular ; generally about the size of a large basin, but much deeper, and evidently the work of nature. They are smooth within, though not regular, as in most of them a piece of rock projects up in the middle, which is also as level as the curvature of the hole. They are generally filled with water, even those which are above the level of the adjacent wells, and appear to have no communication with them, a circumstance which probably arises from some internal means of supply. Though traces of such holes may be frequent at waterfalls, and though there are marks of several near

many of the torrents in this very river, there are certainly few places where they are so numerous or so perfect in their formation. It is difficult to account for their origin, but they have most probably been caused by the action of water gradually washing away the softer parts of the rock. The country people call this place the "Rumbling Hole," and look upon it with no little veneration.

THE grand and extensive views, which the weary traveller will command from the summits of the mountains, come last to be described, and well deserve to be numbered among the natural curiosities of the parish. From Devis may be seen on one side, the bays of Carriekfergus and Strangford; on the other, the broad expanse of Lough Neagh almost beneath our feet. The south presents the lofty mountains of Mourne; and apparently in a continuous chain, the distant hills of Tyrone and Derry, ending in Sleimis, and others of our northern highlands. Towards the east the Irish channel may be distinguished beyond the terrific rocks which restrain its fury near the entrance of this bay; and farther on, in a clear atmosphere, the coast of Scotland, and the Isle of Man, are visible above the blue horizon. Between these remote objects the view is varied and enlivening in the extreme. The finely cultivated hills of Down; the spacious bay of Carriekfergus, with the islands and light-house at its

Grand Prospects from the summits of the mountains.

entrance, and every little indenture on its coast marked with the distinctness of a map; the different villages, the numerous country seats on both sides of the Lough, surrounded or adorned with numberless clusters of trees, in some places apparently meeting the lucid wave; the town of Belfast enveloped in smoke, with the shipping, the Long Bridge, the beautiful valley through which the Lagan winds, and lastly the smooth stream itself, occasionally hid from observation by intervening hills or groves, comprise the principal objects which serve to fix the wandering sight. The scene nearer the mountains is also rich and animating. The country appears a level plain; while the course of every road, the situation of every house, and the dimensions of every field, can be accurately traced. In the opposite direction, the improved districts of Killead, Glenavy, and Ballinderry, together with Lough Beg, separated from its gigantic neighbour; and that beautiful and picturesque spot, Ram's Island, are all equally distinct. The superior height of Devis can no where be more plainly perceived than when standing on its summit; and every one that witnesses the charming and widely extended prospect which has been described, must contrast it in feeling exultation, with the bleak and barren summit from which it is viewed.

From Mac Art's fort on the Cave hill, there is a prospect of many of the same objects. Besides these, the high rocks, forming a sort of semi-circular gulf, the unconnected masses which have been precipitated from the surrounding heights, and the numerous conical hillocks at their base, exactly resembling in shape the products of volcanic eruptions, all of which by impressing the mind as the marks of some horrid convulsion, most powerfully interest and awe the spectator. There is no part of our mountain scenery at all to be compared with this for magnificence ; and if, from a connection with other objects, its appearance from a distance be highly beautiful, a nearer acquaintance cannot fail of producing a truly sublime effect. For the abundance and grandeur of its natural, for the softness and variety of its artificial scenery, this parish cannot certainly be exceeded by many in the kingdom ; affording therefore vast scope for the speculations of the naturalist, and for the admiration of those who can be gratified with the diversified works of nature and of art.

View from
Mac Art's
fort.

Population, Food, Fuel, Wealth, Dress, &c.

In the year 1725, the town and parish of Belfast contained about 10,000 persons. Their inhabitants have been lately estimated at upwards of 50,000. It

Population.

would be very difficult in so large a place, where so many religions are professed, and no regular register kept, to specify the proportion of births and marriages, much less the number of persons at any particular age. The former population of the parish must have been greatly regulated by the increase of the town of Belfast, and it probably now contains double the number of inhabitants which it did half a century ago, as many old people can distinctly tell the small number of houses that once existed upon roads which are now nearly populous streets.

Food.

WITH the inhabitants of this parish, the most general articles of food are, as in all other country places in the kingdom, potatoes, meal and milk. The farmers, however, are not in the habit of sending all their pigs to market, and the vicinity of the town of Belfast affords the means of procuring a considerable quantity of other fleshmeat, which is generally plentiful, and often cheap. Though it is usual to hear at present some very serious complaints of a lamentable reduction in the quality of the fare of the common people, there is reason to think, that such representations will apply less to this parish than to most other places, and that the inhabitants still enjoy, in proportion to their rank or circumstances, a due though not in many cases, an abundant share of the comforts of this life. Among the lower orders in the town of Belfast, fish

(principally herrings) is in very general use; and these people, in some instances, appear more intent on enjoying superfluities, than their station or their means would seem to render prudent. Among other things of this kind, it might not be improper to animadvert particularly on the pernicious influence of a foreign luxury which has crept in among the lower classes of most large towns, and the consumption of which is unusually great in Belfast. It may easily be conjectured that *tea* is the article alluded to; and it is undoubtedly one of the greatest drawbacks on the substantial comforts, and the health of labouring people which can possibly be conceived. When introduced into England it was sometimes smoked in pipes as tobacco is at present; but finally the extract was preferred to the vapour, which when rendered palatable, and taken in small quantities, may not be thought unwholesome or unpleasant. But there are poor persons in Belfast, (generally, but not always females) who quaff this noxious beverage in large quantities, frequently without any qualifying ingredient, often at six o'clock in the morning, two in the afternoon, or some other hour equally unseasonable; spending in this way the wages which would procure for them wholesome, nutritious food on a nauseous senseless draught that will inevitably render the frame weak and emaciated, which their shrivelled skins and haggard countenances sufficiently demonstrate.

Fuel.

THE fuel used here consists principally of coals, all supplied from the town of Belfast. The average price is twenty shillings per ton ; and in summer the Scotch coals are much cheaper. There is a vast quantity of bog on the mountains, and the people in their immediate neighbourhood use no other kind of fuel. Owing however to the difficulty of procuring this turf, and the moderate price of coals, it is not in so much demand as it would otherwise be in the lower parts of the parish.

Dress.

THE inhabitants of this place have a considerable fondness for dress, even more so on some occasions than their circumstances would appear to warrant. In the country, they are commonly clean and decent; and on that day appropriated to rest, the appearance of farmers, and their families, round Dunmurry, along the base of the Black mountain, and some other places is deserving of a much higher commendation. There is not, however, any of that serviceable woollen cloth made here, which forms the staple in some other places. In the town of Belfast, (at least on Sundays) a stranger, unacquainted with the resources of a manufacturing people, would be altogether astonished at the profusion of finery which is displayed. So complete a metamorphosis may often be effected on these occasions, that it might be a matter of impossibility to recognize the decked and garished persons of laborious mechanics, and those

who have been learning during the rest of the week, the music of the spinning jenny ; or to distinguish, as far as raiment is concerned, the families of tradespeople or petty shopkeepers from the great ones of the land. This is a disposition, however, which must, in many instances, be rather applauded than condemned.

Not taking into consideration the wealth of resident noblemen or gentry, this parish may fairly be considered the richest in Ireland. The extent of its manufactures, and its importance in the commercial world, are conclusive proofs of such an opinion ; and though the town of Belfast and its neighbourhood are the principal sources of this opulence, a survey of the parish will convince every person, that great capital has been expended, by many individuals, and in various occupations. The manufacturers, however, in proportion to their number, possess more wealth than the agriculturists. Though the land is dear, the farmers also are generally in comfortable circumstances, not however without extremes. Some are rich, and some are poor, which must doubtless depend, in a great measure, on their own exertions.

Wealth.

The state of education in the town of Belfast has been already noticed. As to the country, there are few places where the means of instruction are more universally diffused. The small schools

State of education.

throughout the parish are extremely numerous and well attended. They are much more frequently to be met with in the mountainous districts than might be expected ; and the anxiety of the poorest inhabitants to educate their children is a farther proof of the increasing improvement of the people in this part of the country. The Lancasterian school in the village of Whitehouse, and exactly on the borders of the parish, is of inestimable benefit to the surrounding inhabitants. Those engaged in the cotton works at this place, and who are prevented, by their occupation, from attending during the week, enjoy the advantages of instruction on the Sabbath. In this parish, where it can scarcely be said that any inhabitant is so poor as to be unable to afford his family some trifling education, the want of endowed schools is not so much felt, or to be regretted.

SUCH are the extensive means of improvement for the lower classes which this parish affords. With such opportunities, therefore, and such inclination to take advantage of them, it is not to be considered wonderful that education should be so generally diffused ; so general indeed, that it might be rather a rare occurrence, to find a native inhabitant of this parish who cannot read and write. Some of the older residents might perhaps be found extremely deficient in these particulars ; but the number of such

is undoubtedly small; and will entirely disappear with the rising generation.

History, Present Stock of People, Language, Manners, Customs, Traditions, &c.

IF we may be guided by rational conjecture, this parish, from its proximity to Britain, must have been peopled at a very early period. It is needless, however, to extend this hypothesis, either by adducing any proofs in support of it, or enlarging on the probable state of the aborigines, farther than to observe, that as roving savages their principal employments were war and hunting; that their habitations were woods or caves; and that they were ignorant of the use of metals, numberless stone weapons still remaining as memorials of their barbarity.

Early inhabited.

THE most remote era at which any name can be applied to this parish, is in the second century, when it is placed, according to the Irish antiquarians, in the southern part of Dalaradia, an ancient division of the county of Antrim.* The inhabitants were called Dalnarians; and from the colonies that they placed in Argyleshire, as well as from the depredations, which, in conjunction with their brethren in Scotland, they committed on the Roman settle-

A part of the ancient Dalaradia.

* For a farther illustration of this subject see "A Sketch of the History of the County of Antrim."—*Anthologia Hibernica*, vol. 3.

ments in Britain, their country acquired great celebrity in the early affairs of Ireland. Though the inhabitants of this parish, undoubtedly, took an active share in these transactions, it is impossible that any information, relative to them in particular, could have been preserved through the lapse of so many ages. The history of the period indeed presents little else than a continual series of emigrations and remigrations, of intestine wars, and predatory incursions.

Infested by
the Danes.

ABOUT the middle of the eighth century this country was much infested by the Danes ; and if even but the half of those low forts found in the kingdom were constructed by these people, they must have been particularly numerous in the parish of Belfast. It would seem that these foreigners in some cases incorporated with the Irish ; and by adopting their language and manners, frequently became great chiefs among the natives. Thus Donald O'Loughlin was king of Dalaradia in 1182, and his name signifies, the son of the Scandinavian.

It is impossible to ascertain whether any English were settled here by De Courcey ; but it is certain that as the power of these invaders increased, this place, from its vicinity to some of their strongest stations, would be considered one of the most se-

cure and desirable districts among their northern possessions. After the failure of the Scottish invasion of 1315, the Irish recovered, as has been formerly mentioned, all their territory in this neighbourhood. The parish of Belfast, with a great tract of land northward, was allotted to Hugh Boye O'Neil; the name of the whole grant being at the same time changed from Dalaradia to North or Lower Claneboye.

Becomes the property of Hugh Boye O'Neil.

It remained in the family of O'Neil from that period till the reign of Queen Elizabeth, by whom it was granted, in 1571, on the attainder of Shane O'Neil, to Sir Thomas Smith, and Thomas Smith, his son; but the endeavours of these persons to retain possession of the country were not attended with success.* The younger Smith was killed in

Granted in 1571 to Sir Thomas Smith.

* There is an account of this grant to the Smiths, and its failure, in a rare and valuable manuscript called the "Grand Inquisition of the County of Down," taken in the year 1691. It is there stated, that all the temporal lands, tenements, hereditaments within the territories of Claneboye, and the Great Ards, came into the possession of Queen Elizabeth, in the eleventh of her reign, by an act of parliament for the attainder of Shane O'Neil; the extinguishing of that name, and entitling the said queen, her heirs, and successors to the county of Tyrone, and other counties in Ulster, &c. "We therefore grant to the said Thomas Smith, the father, and Thomas, his son, all and singular the Mannors, Houses, Castles, Monasteries, Abbies, Priories, Chantries, Liberties, Chappels, Rectories, Messuages, Buildings, Lands, Tenements, Meadows, Pastures, Woods, Wastes, Forrests, Chases, Parks, Warrens, Lakes, Waters, Pools, Fishings, Commons, Moors, Marshes, Furzes, Mines, Minerals, Rents, Reversions, Services, Advowsons, Tythes, Wards, Marriages, Reliefs, Escheats, Commodities, Emoluments, and all

Recovered by
the O'Neils.

attempting to establish a colony in the county of Down ; and after that event the lands were entirely retaken by the powerful clan which formerly possessed them. The principal proprietor in this neighbourhood was Conn O'Neil, of Castlereagh, whose chief possessions in 1603 were the Ards and Clanboye, and as a sub or lesser territory under the lat-

other hereditaments whatsoever with their appurtenances, in the Great Ards, Little Ards, and Clanboye ; towards the south, from the Castle of Belfast, Castle Moubray, and Castle Toom ; and all the Monastery of Massareene in Clanboye, and the said Castle of Belfast, Castle Moubray, and Castle Toom, and all the Monastery of Massareene in Clanboye ; as also all and singular the Mannors, &c. lying in Clanboye, Tyrone, and other places in Ulster, which the said Smiths, or their assigns, shall, before the 28th March 1579, obtain and inherit against the Irish ; reserving to us, and our heirs, all mines of copper, gold, and silver : all to be held of the Castle of Carrickfergus by the service of one Knight's fee." They were also farther acquitted for the space of seven years, from all exactions, called Coyn, Livery, and Cess, and allowed the privileges of Courts Leet and Baron.

The Inquisition then goes on to state the Tenor of the Covenants, beginning with an account that in the " Queen's Earldom of Ulster there be divers Parcells of Land, that lie waste or Inhabited with a wicked, barbarous, and uncivil people, some Scottish and some wild Irish ; and whereas, the Smiths, with a power of Englishmen agree to subdue all, and them plant with faithful subjects." It appears that Sir Thomas also covenanted, that all such as should be partakers in the enterprise should have the advantage of the following conditions: For every footman, or any one who shall find such at his own charge, one plowland to hold of the said Smiths, and their heirs, by the hundredth part of a knight's fee, and such other rents as shall be mutually agreed on. For a horseman, two plowlands by the fiftieth part of a knight's fee, and such other charges as may seem sufficient ; each plowland to contain six score acres of arable, each acre to be four poles in breadth, and forty in length, and each pole to contain twenty-four feet of English standard measure in length. With the Queen they covenant to have for every plowland one able English foot soldier, well armed and furnished like the men of England ; or for every two townlands a light English horseman, accounted in the same manner. At every general Hostings, on fifteen days notice, they agree to appear before the deputy with the third part of all the horsemen and footmen that they are bound to provide. They stipu-

ter, the Plains of Belfast are expressly included. This however did not perhaps comprise the whole parish, as it is at present divided, but the Falls meadows, which are still denominated the Plains; part of Malone, and probably some townlands in the adjoining districts. If this be correct, the northern end of the parish must have been held by some other member of the same family. It appears also from the subsequent statements in the Grand Inquisition, which is the authority for the foregoing facts, that the sub-territories in Claneboye were rather possessed by chieftains of the sept, who probably paid Conn tribute as their liege lord, than reckoned as his own private possessions, and that among others the Plains of Belfast were held from him by the Abbey of Bangor. This powerful lord, however, was deprived a short time after, but on different

late farther to grant no estate to any of the mere Irish or Scottish Irish, or to intermarry with them without permission.

The Inquisition then proceeds to state that Thomas, the son, did in 1572 enter the earldom of Ulster, but did not subdue it; that the land was not planted with good subjects, that the Smiths had not appeared with their proportion of men, though their assistance was often required; that they did not win the castles, attend the deputy at Hostings, or pay the crown rent, and therefore that the whole grant reverted to King James.

Nothing is more curious, or better deserving observation, than to trace the small remains that still point out the original owners of this land. The names of places are most remarkable. Thus; Ligonell, where O'Neil loosed his hounds: Skigoneil, O'Neil's Thorn, supposed to mean a fort or fortress, and called a *thorn* from the uneasiness which the English experienced from it. These are both names of townlands in the parish of Belfast, and have some effect in shewing the occupations of the powerful chieftains who once possessed this country.

For these and all the other derivations of Irish names throughout the work I am indebted to Mr. Samuel Bryson of Belfast.

Granted in
1612 to Sir A.
Chichester.

occasions, partly by the artifices of others, and partly by his own conduct, of all his princely estate. The whole parish of Belfast was granted by King James in 1612 to Sir Arthur Chichester, who had previously established a number of Devonshire men in Malone. He was imitated in this laudable practice by Sir Moses Hill, who introduced large colonies from Lancashire and Cheshire, as well into Malone, as into different parts of the neighbouring parishes. But the population was more rapidly increased by Scottish settlers, who arrived here in great numbers from the very commencement of the reign of King James; and who, by introducing more general habits of industry, materially benefited the country in which they fixed their abode.

Present stock
of inhabi-
tants, &c.

THE present inhabitants therefore might be divided into three classes. First: the descendants of the Scots who arrived here at different times; but especially during the reigns of James I. and Charles I. They principally occupy the sea coast, as well as the northern and western parts of the parish, undoubtedly forming, if the town of Belfast be taken into consideration, by far the most numerous and most important portion of the population. Second: the descendants of the English, settled here in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. generally established in Malone, and also comprising a large portion of the inhabitants. Third: the remains of

those few Irish families who escaped the civil wars. They reside in the south western parts of the parish, chiefly above Hannahstown, in a bare and mountainous district. They are in general the poorest inhabitants ; inconsiderable in number, and yet most deserving of notice, as being, perhaps, some of those whose progenitors once possessed the rich and fertile plains which lie beneath them.*

THE English tongue is universally spoken in this parish, the few remaining inhabitants of the Irish stock being almost wholly unacquainted with the dialect of their ancestors. The language of the inhabitants of Belfast and its neighbourhood is generally acknowledged to be considerably pure. It is not, however, by any means, free from incorrectness, presenting both in pronunciation and in phraseology, many improprieties, most commonly Scotticisms. Towards the parishes of Templepatrick and Carnmoney the Scotch accent becomes extremely harsh and disagreeable ; so that it might, in some cases, be with difficulty understood by those who are accustomed to a more sonorous pronunciation. There are however numerous exceptions to this, probably arising from a more frequent intercourse with the inhabitants of Belfast, or an inter-

Language.

* The principal names among them are Hamill, Macquillan, Macmullan, Macqueeston, &c.

mixture of the Scottish race with settlers from other parts of the country.

Genius and
disposition.

THE genius and disposition of the inhabitants of this parish cannot afford scope for a very interesting detail, not displaying so much diversity of character as those places in which the genuine Irish abound, and where the features are, of course, bolder and more peculiar. It is difficult to trace the prevailing dispositions of a people without constant and familiar intercourse. But it is still more difficult to furnish curious and original matter for accounts of this kind, where there is nothing extremely singular; where there is little so prominent, or distinguished above the common level as to create astonishment and excite inquiry.

It has already been shown that the bulk of the population is composed of the descendants of Scots; and it would be needless to protract a decision on their disposition and character, by waiting for relaxed or unguarded moments. They are the same at all times, and in all situations. The merchants, manufacturers, and farmers of this parish form a numerous body, distinguished for patient and laudable industry. They are rather persevering than speculative; and the best of them, rather naturally acute and intelligent, than disposed to be envious of literary acquirements.

IN any part of this kingdom, it would be difficult or impossible to find a class of inhabitants endowed with more shrewdness than the country people of this parish. There are to be found among them none of those thoughtless, light-hearted dispositions, which the common voice has attributed to the Irish race. They are a plodding people; cool, dry and deliberate, but evincing at the same time, in general intercourse, nothing farther repulsive or austere than an eager curiosity to pry into the names or employments of those with whom they converse, and which is the more difficult to be repressed if that conversation be familiar. To these dispositions, also, however unpromising some might consider them, would rightly be ascribed the pre-eminence, which, on comparison, these people would be found to assume among the peasantry of Ireland. Nor will it require a long acquaintance to discover the independence of mind and principle by which they are actuated; and which marks a people totally different from the prodigal and submissive* inhabitants of other parts of this kingdom. Each man here considers himself as good as his neighbour, and will submit to no unwarrantable oppression, however

* The following passage occurs in Wakefield's Statistical and Political Account of Ireland, vol. ii p. 722, "In the month of June, 1809, at the races at Carlow, I saw a poor man's cheek laid open by the stroke of a whip. The inhuman wretch who inflicted the wound was a gentleman of some rank in the county. The unhappy sufferer was standing in his way, and without requesting him to move, he struck him with less ceremony than an English country squire would

elevated may be the quarter from which it comes. Several instances of that fearless resistance to what they have looked upon as arbitrary or tyrannical acts in their superiors, might be brought forward in support of this. It is not however in the town of Belfast, where there is such a conflux of people, that inherent dispositions of this kind are to be expected. The Scottish race, both here and in the neighbouring parish of Carnmoney, are so bold and independent in their politics as to display an invincible antipathy to any innovations in their civil or religious opinions and establishments. One of the most popular preachers, probably in the kingdom, was sharply censured by a modern puritan of this parish for what he looked upon as a heinous transgression, but which others would represent not only as pardonable, but strictly proper and praiseworthy. The creed of the preacher was sound and orthodox ; his discourse was long and forcible ; and, what was of infinitely more consequence, it was extemporaneous ; his articulation was distinct, and his man-

a deg. But what astonished me even more than the deed, and which shews the difference between English and Irish feeling was, that not a murmur was heard, nor hand raised in disapprobation ; but the surrounding spectators dispersed, running different ways, like slaves terrified at the rod of their despot."

The comparison which Mr. Wakefield here makes between English and Irish feeling must be received with some limitation, for I am persuaded that if any man should commit so cruel and wanton an action, on the Maze course for instance, which is ten miles from Belfast, he would be driven from the ground with danger and disgrace, were he the lord of the soil.

ner appropriate. All these qualifications were of no avail, because, " he looked wonderful bishop-like with that gown on him." These were the very words ; they were spoken with no little asperity, and formed the sole objection. But the inhabitants of this place are at the same time a truly valuable community. Their prudent, cautious, and independent principles, so far from retarding the advancement of industry, hasten and confirm its progress. It may safely be affirmed, therefore, that those disorders which have disturbed and disgraced other parts of this country, can never reach such a pitch here, so long as there are manufactures to employ the people, and so long as prosperity shall continue to flow from such a source.

HOWEVER great may be the progress of civilization in this parish, and however much it has contributed to root out the ignorance of former times, there are still to be found many of those superstitious prejudices and notions yet so prevalent in other parts of this kingdom. They form, however, but a lingering remnant ; and on many occasions are continued or believed merely on account of that reverence which always accompanies customs that have existed from " time out of mind." Few of those remarkable practices, which flourish in such numbers among the Irish stock, can be discovered

Customs, &c.

here ; and though many of those, also, which do remain, are foolish and extravagant, there is not perhaps, to speak generally, any class of people in Ireland more free from superstition than the inhabitants of this parish. It must be confessed, however, that this observation applies with most truth to the low country ; and it is among the mountaineers, where they are cherished perhaps by the wildness and solitude of the scenery, that those singular or frivolous customs, so well deserving of minute investigation, may be expected, and will chiefly be found. Though the reliance therefore on the superstitions alluded to, may not be universal, those who do believe them, often place the most implicit confidence in their truth ; and much to amuse might be collected from the absurdity of some of these customs, the pertinacity of many in confiding so steadfastly on their reality, and the willingness of others to reject them, yet still reluctant to be thought wiser than their fathers.

Elf stones.

As so much of the prosperity of the country people depends on the preservation of their cattle from disease, the most efficient mode of attaining this desirable object has always been sought after with a solicitude proportionable to its importance. Not satisfied, however, with the operation of direct and probable remedies, recourse has been had to spells and amulets, leading to some of the most delusive

superstitions which the ingenuity of man has ever devised. Cows are subject to a disorder in the side, arising from a very natural cause, but according to the opinions of those who arrogate to themselves a greater measure of wisdom than their neighbours, the disease is occasioned by no common influence, and must be eradicated by no common means. The animal is said to be *elf shot*, that is, wounded, or in some way injured, by one of those ancient and well known arrow heads of stone, so frequently found in this kingdom, called therefore by the people for this reason *elf stones*, coming from they know not where, and shot by, they say not whom. The malicious design, however, is defeated by a very subtle counter-charm. A draught of salt and water is prepared, one of these missile weapons is dropped with due solemnity into the potion, which is immediately swallowed by the diseased patient. There are those in this parish who believe that the cure will be speedy and effectual, merely from the presence and supernatural power of a piece of common flint. Philosophers have long searched in vain for the *elixir vitæ*. Behold here, in part at least, an admirable succeedaneum, but like some of the other stupendous exertions of human ingenuity, it is unfortunately not known to whom we are indebted for this invaluable discovery; a circumstance which will leave the world in suspense

and regret, and which has robbed some sage personage of an imperishable name.

MANY there are, however, who wisely considering that the prevention of a disease is always preferable to any remedy, defend their cattle from all danger, internal or external, present or remote, by a simple and invulnerable armour. An elf stone is hung at the cow's head, sometimes on the horn, and it has been found by long experience, that the sight of this object, like the eye of the basilisk, arrests the progress and annihilates the power of the malignant dæmon, or whatever other being it is, which would molest so useful and inoffensive an animal. It is indeed extremely curious to observe the uncommon superstition which is attached to these arrow heads. Scarcely a house is without one, some of which may have served as universal specifics for the last two or three centuries. The people reflect not on the barbarism of other years ; and it must undoubtedly raise their wonder to see such numbers of these regularly shaped stones, and exercise their invention to account for their existence. They support the belief of their supernatural origin by many sturdy arguments ; and will relate with astonishment how they dug or ploughed in a field where not one was to be seen ; but lo ! when arrived the next morning on the same spot to resume their toil, the ground was strewn with the mysterious weapons. An en-

gement in archery, a tilt or a tournament had taken place among the dwellers in the middle regions, when the men of this world had retired to their habitations. It must be remarked, however, that the belief in these things is weakening apace, and that even many of the mountaineers treat them with contempt. They may not be always sincere in this, being ashamed perhaps to acknowledge their credulity ; but even if such should be the case, it is a certain token that they are losing ground in their estimation.

MANY instances of that superstitious dread which accompanies the destruction of old forts may be observed among the inhabitants of this parish. Some consider such an occupation little less than sacrilegious ; and support their opinion with many miraculous stories, of the dire misfortunes which beset the property, as well as the persons, of the principals, aiders, and abettors in these crimes. Others again, regardless of such examples, employ the spade and the plough in the business without much compunction ; and as the number of these fearless agriculturists is very properly increasing, so, it would seem, that the guardian fairies of the forts, overpowered perhaps by multitudes, are relaxing in

Superstitious
notions con-
cerning old
forts.

their vigilance, as most transgressors escape now with impunity.*

Old thorns.

SIMILAR to this, and perhaps even more general, is the respect for old thorns, which are numerous in this parish, particularly at Squire's hill. There are many persons by whom they are preserved with as much care as the mistletoe of the Druids, and who would contemplate almost with horror, the downfall of their bare and knotted trunks. Their venerable appearance certainly claims some indulgence; so that from this circumstance, and the innumerable tales which are related of the vengeance that has been inflicted by unseen agents on those who have treated these hallowed temples with disrespect, it is not at all incredible that they should impress weak minds with considerable awe. There are certainly some who discredit many of the prodigies attributed to the elf stones; and yet who would, upon no consideration, be concerned in laying the axe, or even the pruning knife, to these antiquated thorns. Some years ago five pounds were offered by a late extensive landed proprietor to the person who would cut down an old thorn, which was an obstruction to some improvement in his grounds. It remained, however, for a long time untouched, till at length

* It is perhaps worth noticing, that there have been frequent instances of persons who have levelled these forts being attacked, or conceiving themselves to be attacked with some distemper; which proves, not the power of the fairies, but the power of imagination.

it was destroyed at night, when darkness covered the parish, by some desperate or needy individual. Suspicion fixed upon a certain person ; and let it have been well or ill founded, the usual fatality attended the man who was its object. The airy divinities called in all their forces from the outskirts of their dominions to pour vengeance on his devoted head ; the arrow of adversity was fixed, and flew with a sure and deadly aim. His family was dispersed by disease and death ; and he himself is at present a helpless mendicant. So runs the story. On another occasion, however, when the fuel was scarce, the wants of the people got the better of their fears, great numbers of thorns having been cut down and consigned to the flames. It is not recorded that any misfortunes attended these delinquents.

It is almost unnecessary to mention that these Fairies. forts and bushes are supposed to be the haunts of fairies ; and many is the place in this parish which will be pointed out to the traveller as *gentle*, and many a fabulous narrative may he hear of the astonishing feats of these puissant and agile beings. It is no uncommon thing to meet, particularly among the mountains, men of years and experience, intelligent enough in other matters, who believe sincerely in their existence ; and who are by no means inclined to be merry on the subject. Though this is

perhaps the most general piece of superstition in the kingdom, it is impossible to find any person who pretends to have had ocular proofs of its truth. There are always two or three *removes* in the story ; and that humourous tale of magnifying celebrity, called " The Three Black Crows," would be found but a trifle, in comparison with the enormous additions which are acquired by these fairy fictions in rolling from credulous tongues to greedy ears *ad infinitum*. We may indeed meet with persons, more easy of belief, or more favoured than their contemporaries, who will assert, positively and seriously, that they have beheld the fairy forts and bushes blazing in splendid, but harmless glory ; or were charmed into mute rapture with the celestial notes of the fife, fiddle, or bagpipes from their subterraneous habitations. Though a story so truly ridiculous has been often repeated, the particular tunes which entranced these wondering mortals, are points still so far undetermined as to have been the occasion of much warm and angry controversy ; at the same time, that all parties give the invisible musicians the most unbounded praise for being thorough adepts in that elegant art.

THESE notions, and several others which might be mentioned, however capable of a more diffuse illustration, are so far from being confined to this place, that a sprinkling of the whole is perhaps suffi-

cient ; and it will be more proper to limit the remaining observations on this head to those which have better pretensions to a more strict locality.

THERE is a custom, at least in most parts of this kingdom, of repairing on Easter Monday to some conspicuous or celebrated place, generally an old fort, for the avowed purpose of mirth and festivity. The good people of Belfast and the neighbouring country, who are disposed to forego for one day the toils and cares of this busy world, have selected, from time immemorial, the Cave hill as the scene of their convivial sports. Mac Art's Fort, as being the greatest for many miles around, is probably the ostensible object which attracts their visit ; but dreading to wrestle so near the sky with a certain potent and insidious enemy who is no respecter of times or places, and who has never been known to be absent from any Irish fair, wake, patron, Easter day, or other jovial meeting, they very prudently choose a less elevated situation ; and pitching with much circumspection, numerous tents on the soft green sward beneath, where the advances of the said treacherous adversary can be watched, his attacks resisted on firm ground, and where the vanquished may rise uninjured from the combat, they indulge in all that mirth which the scene and the occasion cannot fail to inspire. Among the more juvenile revel-

Curious custom on Easter Monday.

lers, at this great festival, there is a singular custom, and one which is nearly local. Eggs are boiled hard in a liquid in which some colouring matter, generally logwood, or furze blossoms, has been infused. When properly dyed they are carried to the fields, and rolled on the ground, thrown into the air, or used in whatever manner may suit the fancy of the clamorous throng. This practice is here entirely confined to children, and certainly to all appearances very unmeaning. There is reason to think, however, that it forms the remains of the importance and solemnity which attended the presentation of the paschal eggs; a custom, which, though divided into various branches, is of as long a standing as it is at present general through many parts of the European continent, particularly in Russia.* It might be a difficult matter to explain how this superstition, which seems now to belong to the Greek church, has got footing here; but this circumstance will give rise at least to one interesting reflection; that customs, to which more credulous or more unenlightened ages have attached a reverential importance, may dwindle at last into the trivial sports of children, into an insignificance which mocks their former greatness.

* For a farther account of this subject, see "Brund's Popular Superstitions," p. 310. and the authorities there referred to, Hakluyt and Clarke.

ON May day, a happy and joyous era, it is usual in many places to collect flowers peculiar to the season, and to suspend them in wreaths or circles from some conspicuous situation; or else to dance "wirth and glee" round a pole or bush, decorated in a similar manner. Neither of these good old practices, however, is in much repute here, being superseded by one which seems to agree better with the general inclination of the people. Large bushes are procured, and profusely ornamented with rags, ribbands, and streamers of all colours, shapes, and sizes. At almost every corner in the town of Belfast, one of these is fixed, surrounded with a group of idle, mischievous urchins, who attack all passengers with the utmost importunity, for "money to ~~help~~ their May pole." A rope is sometimes placed across the street, with the view of obliging all refractory persons to comply with their demands. This, however, is but a corruption of the original custom, and will not probably be of long continuance; resembling, perhaps, in this respect, the fate of many others, which have been anticipated with delight, or have been the source of much innocent gratification.

Curious customs on May day and May eve.

ON May eve, when the sun has gone down, it is customary for young damsels to go forth to the fields in a body, when each of them procures a living snail or a bunch of yarrow, from either of which it is in their power to discover (by a method which has re-

ceived the sanction of the most prudent and knowing matrons) the names of those who are to be their partners through this "breathing world." The process is simple. A dish or platter, whether of earthen ware or wood it matters not, is placed over the body of the unintelligent reptile, which has free liberty to exercise its nimbleness on an arena of meal or sawdust, the exact dimensions of the prison house in which it is thus most innocently incarcerated. Though the snail be not reckoned the most active of the animal creation, yet neither is it altogether disposed to a state of perfect quiescence, and as in all its movements it is well known to leave a shining "pledge behind," so in its rambles when in bondage during this critical night, the faculties of the creature are miraculously enlarged, and it is found to trace with singular precision some two or three letters of the Roman alphabet which form the initials of the name of some future happy helpmate. If at any time, however, a mischievous or an incredulous person should have an opportunity of pointing out any superfluity in the inscription (a case not, absolutely impossible), his objection is readily and justly obviated by claiming due allowance for the flourishes of so expert and tasteful a scribe,

THE yarrow is an equally useful auxiliary on such occasions. It produces dreams, in which events to come are depicted, and in which the future yok-

fellows of those who try the charm "with heart and hand," stalk with a grave and majestic pace before their slumbering senses.

THE traditions of the inhabitants of this parish, with respect at least to those times and incidents which have marked with so much singularity the page of Irish history, are excessively crude and vague. Their earliest tradition, (if such it can be called) is an account of a deformed and diminutive race of beings, whom they denominate Pechts or Pauchts, and who formerly inhabited caves in the earth. It is usual to hear persons when wanting to express any thing immeasurably old, exclaim, "as far back as the time of the Pechts." It is difficult to account in a satisfactory manner for this strange tradition; which, if general only among the Scottish race, might reasonably be thought to be derived from the kingdom of their ancestors, Pechts being the true orthography for what is more commonly written Picts.

Vague and uncertain in their traditions.

THE only traditions which remain here concerning the Danes, but which exist also in other places, are, that they brewed beer from heath; and that red-haired men are of Danish extraction. With respect to the former of these, it appears impossible that a palatable liquor could have been made from such a material alone; perhaps honey, so well known at

Traditions concerning the Danes.

least to the ancient Irish, has supplied the deficiency. As to the latter, nothing is more common than to call an able-bodied red haired man, "a stout hardy Dane;" an observation which is remarkably corroborated by the fair complexions and light hair so general among the people in the northern parts of Europe. The inhabitants of this parish mention with the utmost obscurity, the era of the Danes. It is an epoch to which they can fix no time, much less attach any particular event. They speak indeed almost indiscriminately of the time of the Danes, and the wars of Ireland; by the latter of which they generally understand the great rebellion of 1641. The few inhabitants of the Irish race exhibit in their traditions the same perplexity. It is two or three generations too late to obtain any thing curious or precise in this way; for though their intercourse with the inhabitants of towns may have sharpened their faculties, it has perhaps extinguished their love for the tales of their forefathers. They have heard indeed of the destructive progress of "Phelimy Roe;" they have imbibed from tradition a tincture of that dislike which prevails among their sect in Ireland to the name of King James; and, above all, they are possessed of a notion that their ancestors were driven up to the mountains, to make room for more powerful and more fortunate rivals.

It is remarkable, however, that all can tell of the mighty prowess of that redoubted champion Fin Mac Cool. But if this title be the same with the celebrated name of Fingal, they woefully mistake the character, and sadly misrepresent the actions of the king of Morven. They can tell of his vast, unwieldy stature ; and many homely anecdotes of his giant strength, or irresistible cunning. Their stories are highly absurd ; and form a most complete burlesque on those immortal poems attributed to an ancient bard, and in which Fingal makes so distinguished a figure.

Traditions of
Fin MacCool.

BUT if we may put credence in the speculations of a certain enthusiastic advocate* for the authenticity of the sublime productions alluded to, this and some of the adjacent parishes must indeed be raised to immortal celebrity, as the scene where Fingal fought, and of which Ossian has sung. In a pamphlet which has been lately given to the world, entitled *Ossiano*, an attempt is made from the coincidence of names and places, and from several other ingenious expedients, to ascertain the battle fields of Fingal in Ulster ; thence to prove the genuineness of Ossian's poems, as well as the purity and faithfulness of their translation. The attempt is a bold one ; and though more curious than most subjects which admit not of certainty, any interest which it

Ossian's
Poems.

* Hugh Campbell, Esq.

This and the
adjoining pa-
rishes said to
be the scene
of Fingal's
battles.

may excite must be doubly heightened, when it shall be found, that, in the mind of this author, the proofs are amply sufficient to convince all unprejudiced persons that Fingal and his warriors did come from Scotland to Ireland to fight and conquer ; that here is the country which witnessed their achievements ; and that the cause of Ossian now stands on a more undoubted basis than any former proofs had been sufficient to place it.

To enter deeply into this tortured and endless controversy would be irrelevant ; but it may not be amiss to show, with all possible brevity, the dependance which ought to be placed on the marvellous, and apparently imposing proofs of this ingenious commentator. As meant to establish the authenticity of those works ascribed to the great northern epic poet, they are as futile and unavailable as can well be imagined ; which may be shown, in many cases, not only by counter arguments of a similar kind, but from the very words and sentences of the poems in question.

THE first, and what might appear perhaps to a superficial reader the strongest argument, is drawn from the resemblance between the name of Carnmoney, which bounds the parish of Belfast, towards the north, and the Carmona of Ossian. So great, indeed, and so striking is the coincidence, that, ac-

According to the defender of the bard, there is no difficulty whatever in ascertaining that they are one and the same place: the bare mention of the circumstance is sufficient. Nothing, however, can possibly be more deficient in proof; and from the extreme feebleness of this argument, which seems to be reckoned on as an indisputable foundation, an estimate might almost be formed of those which accompany it.

Attempt to prove the identity of the ancient Carmona and the modern Carnmoney.

If other evidence were wanting, it might be proved that Carnmoney is rather a modern name; the parish at present so called, having been formerly denominated Coole. This however may be passed over as immaterial, if it can be shown, beyond a doubt, that the Carmona mentioned by Ossian was not in Ireland, as the pamphlet would endeavour to persuade us, but in Scotland, or in whatever other country acknowledged the matchless Fingal for its king. In the poem of "Cathlin of Clutha," the poet speaks of the "echoing bay of Carmona;" but there are no words whatever, either before or after, by which a reader would be led to imagine, that this said "echoing bay" was elsewhere than in Scotland. The ground work of the poem is laid there. Fingal, and his warriors, while in their own kingdom of Morven, saw, in the bay of Carmona, the "bounding ship," which contained Cathlin, who came from a

distant country requiring aid to avenge his father's murder. Ossian and Oscar were chosen for this expedition ; and it appears from the argument, as well as from the poem itself, that they sailed *from* Carmona's bay. These things must appear as plain and decisive to every reader as they have to Mr. Macpherson, or some other commentator, who has taken care to add in a note the derivation of the word Carmona,* and to inform us that it was an arm of the sea in the neighbourhood of Selma: Selma and Morven are synonymous, and Morven is represented as the refined kingdom of Fingal in North Britain.

LEST this might not be sufficient, another proof, equally palpable, shall be brought forward. Fingal, Ossian and others made an excursion into Ireland, but were speedily recalled, to oppose a British chief who had invaded the kingdom of Morven in their absence. The poem of Lathmon is the subject of this contest, and opens with some impatient exclamations of Fingal, at his detention by contrary winds on the Irish coast. At length however

* This very derivation also is a conclusive argument against the identity of the two places. Carmona is stated in Ossian to signify "the bay of the dark brown hills." Mr. Campbell, to make it bear on his own system, has taken the liberty of dropping the *n* in Carmona, which is a word totally different from Carmona, and instead of meaning "the bay of the dark brown hills," is translated by the "Cairn in the Bog."

their sails are spread ; and after rushing, as the poet expresses it, into Carmona's bay, Ossian ascends the hill ; strikes his bossy shield ; the rock of Morven replies ; and the foe is troubled in his presence. This union of Carmona and Morven appears so clear, that it is matter of astonishment, how the author of this defence could have fallen in to the strange oversights to which his hypothesis in this case inevitably leads.

This pamphlet would also endeavour to convince us that the river Lagan is designated by Ossian under the name of " reedy Lego ;" and as such an assertion relates directly to the subject in hand, it is proper to show how unwarrantable an assumption has been made also in this instance. Lego is never described or mentioned in these poems as a river ; but the frequent notices which are taken of it, and the numerous similes or metaphors which it supplies, invariably and unquestionably declare it to be a lake. It is expressly called " Lego's lake," which has not arisen from any ignorance on the part of the writer as to the distinction between the two bodies of water ; for we read repeatedly of " Lubar's stream," but in no instance of Lego's stream, or any other epithet applicable to that river. It is not of such size as to bear the least resemblance to a lake, and in fact the argument in this, as in the preceding case, rests on so weak a foundation that

The reedy
Lego of Os-
sian and the
river Lagan
said to be the
same.

it is surprising how it could have been advanced by a writer of judgment and discrimination. Ossian, in one of his descriptions, speaks of Lego's "sable surge;" and therefore, because the Lagan has a dull course from Lisburn to Belfast, it is the "ready Lego;" and Lisburn must be the place where Branno performed his earthly pilgrimage. Good logic and sound. That the Lagan, however, appears a sluggish stream, must, in a great degree, be attributed to the locks which preserve the level, for there are eighty feet of a fall between Lisburn and Belfast, and it was really one of the arguments used against the design of converting this river into a canal, that the banks on each side were frequently carried away by its *rapidity*. But is not the writer of this vindication absurdly inconsistent with himself, when he founds his argument for these places being the same, on the presumption of their mutual smoothness and placidity,* and yet in the very poems, with which doubtless he is well acquainted, there are such expressions as these: "like the strength of the waves of Lego;" or "the dark rolling waves of Lego." This, however, is a secondary argument, and need not be much insisted on; for it is as im-

* Besides all this, the epithet *sable* means dark, and not smooth or placid.

It is also, perhaps, worth mentioning, that in a map of Ireland previous to the 15th century, to which I have formerly referred, and which appears to be the joint production of some of our most learned and celebrated antiquaries, the river Lagan is called *Rosa*.

possible to reconcile adverse proofs, as to transform a lake into a river.

THE hollowness of the whole reasoning relative to this part of the subject, may also be shown by another, not perhaps indeed so unequivocal a method. In that short effusion styled "The Death of Cuthullin," the poet calls the rebel Terlath, whom the former overthrew, "chief of Lego;" and relates, that at his death, he was mourned by "Lego's heroes," his compeers in arms; while in the argument to this poem we are informed, that Terlath was a Cennaught warrior. It is unnecessary to mention the distance between the two places.

AGAIN; Cuthullin and Terlath engaged in single combat, while the army of each stood aloof; the former commanding his companions to retire to Slimora's shady side, within view of the engagement, as appears by the sequel; and in the poem of Temora, Carril, the bard, who had accompanied Cuthullin in his expedition, is represented as coming from this same dark Slimora with the news of the hero's fall; there is a note expressly added, that it was a hill in Cennaught near which Cuthullin was slain, and yet the battle in which he fell took place, according to the poem, at Lego. These are plain contradictions, and if they were the only arguments

which could be brought forward, might be rendered much more explicit and convincing.*

THAT Carrickfergus was the Tura of the ancients is entirely conjectural, and advanced with the most dogmatical confidence without any attempt to be supported by proof, or to have it considered that argument was at all necessary for the confirmation of such an opinion.

The Cave hill
discovered to
be the misty
Cromla.

THE author *takes* the Cave hill to be the "misty Cromla" of Ossian. As the poems, however, give no reason whatever to believe that such a conjecture is well founded, it was to have been expected that we might at least have been favoured with some little illustration of it. We are told that Cuthullin retired to his cave at Cromla; and this is perhaps the reason why the mountain in question, which is well known for the excavations in its rocks, has been selected. If such be the case, however, the supposition is invalid, as none of the caves here would agree in appearance with that ascribed by Ossian to Cuthullin, beside which, we are told, fell a foaming

* These notes are in an edition of Ossian's poems published in Mr. Macpherson's life time. They are written consequently by himself, and in proving him to have been a much better "Celtic Antiquary" than the gentleman who has been lately raised to that high dignity, form an unanswerable and overwhelming proof against the system of the latter.

torrent. There is no water near any of those at the Cave hill. It is but fair, however, to mention, that the description of Cuthullin's dwelling place would suit much better a hole in the rock at Woodburn waterfall, above Carrickfergus, called "Peter's Cave." This place has probably escaped the prying eye of the "Celtic antiquary;" but if it should have been the mansion house of Cuthullin, the "strong armed son of the sword" has been contented with indifferent accommodations, for he certainly could not repose himself, as reported of the dervis in the Spectator, after the manner of the eastern nations. The conjecture, however, receives a strong corroboration from the fact, that close beside it, is another small hole which might have served in lieu of better, to house the bay cattle and the glittering chariot of "the generous son of Semo."

BUT to enter on something serious. The author of this neat little pamphlet may be assured that the people here have derived no trifling amusement from his researches. They stared, and were amazed, (and it was impossible they could do otherwise) when informed by a passing traveller from a distant country the most minute particulars of the history and former state of their very fields and gardens; when the most glorious and touching inci-

Crumlin and
Cromleagh
said to be the
same.

deaths of the "olden time" were brought home to their very doors, of which they, the natives—they, the "dull weeds," had remained from age to age in shameful and total ignorance. There was something ominous, and at the same time something degrading in the matter; but when their wonder had fallen a few degrees, they began to discover the presence of a number of slips or errors that had, notwithstanding the caution of the author, made good their entrance into his patriotic document. This was considered somewhat odd, and as surprise is fortunately a passion which does not continue to act very long on the human faculties, its departure was marked by the return of sober, cool inquiry, who discovered, in the twinkling of an eye, that the whole system possessed not in itself the least soundness or strength. Nothing tended more to accelerate this opinion than the account which was given of the pretty little village of Crumlin, the name of which was said to be a derivation from the more ancient title of Cromleagh, an Ossianic appellation, meaning, according to this pamphlet, *high-hill*. It was, however, well known, and never either questioned or denied, that the word Crumlin is a corruption of Camlin, which signifies *the crooked or winding water*. Before he ventured on so very minute accounts of the topography of our country, this acute antiquary should certainly, as in duty bound, have read and studied with peculiar care

those three invaluable volumes which have been compiled on the Statistics of Ireland, in the second of which, and in the survey of the parish in question, he will find evidence sufficient to make him retract his opinion. It is there shown that Crumlin is derived from Camlin and not from Cromleagh, and no one certainly will be disposed to deny that Camlin and Cromleagh have as little resemblance to each other as could possibly exist between two words which begin with the same letter, without taking at all into consideration the contradiction that one signifies a portion of land, and the other, water.

ANOTHER argument is derived from the frequent mention which is made in Ossian, of four grey stones being placed as tombs over the illustrious dead. Innumerable, says the author of this pamphlet, are the monuments of this kind, which are to be met with in travelling among these hills. I have never observed, among the mountains in this or the neighbouring parishes, four grey stones, in any regular or uniform position. Exclusively of the cairns, there may be seen, generally in the rocky districts of the mountains, several little heaps of stones; sometimes more than four, as often, perhaps, less, but always, if I may trust my own judgment, congregated together by some shock of nature.

An argument from the four grey stones mentioned in Ossian.

THOUGH it is perhaps digressing too far from the object of the present work, to dwell any longer on this subject, especially as the strongest proofs against it are drawn from the internal evidence of the poems themselves, I cannot refrain from making a very few farther observations on the other coincidences which have been advanced in support of so rare a system.

The hill of
Mora and the
Sandy Braes
collected.

There seems then to be much stress laid on a passage in the Fourth Book of Fingal, inasmuch as the appearance of a place called the Sandy Braes, beside Connor, agrees with the description given by Ossian of the hill of Mora. The writer of these remarks has never seen either Connor or the Sandy Braes, but having referred to an evidence equally undeniable, it has been found that the "Celtic antiquary" has *inadvertently* misquoted his author, and presented us with a sentence on which to rest his argument, not much different in words, but widely dissimilar in meaning, from that which has been found in four different editions of Ossian's poems. In the pamphlet it is thus worded; "as the winds of night pour *their dark* ocean over the white sands of Mora," &c. This language is figurative; the words, "their dark ocean," are here applied to the air, and might afford some shadow of authority for imagining that the hill of the Sandy Braes, which has also, it is said, a hoary summit,

was here described. But expressed in the following manner in all the editions which have come under my observation, the phrase, though still metaphorical, is distinct and obvious in its meaning: "as the winds of night pour the ocean over the white sands of Mora," &c. The poet makes a clear comparison between the waves of the sea driven with violence on the white sandy shore of Mora, and "the sons of Loehlin" advancing to the strife. The *Mist* pitched on, in this pamphlet, as the Mora of Ossian, is many miles from the sea. Besides, there is no evidence whatever to show that the sands of Mora were at, or near the ground where the host of Fingal was assembled, which is represented as in Ireland. Ossian is giving no description of the country, but rather glances at the word to complete his simile; and it seems that there were other places, as well as that which is mentioned in Fingal, distinguished by the name of Mora, so that it is doubtful to which of them the poet may have alluded. In the poem of "Conlath and Cuthona," the dwelling of the former in Scotland is called Mora. In Berrathon, Ossian himself, feelingly and beautifully lamenting the decay of his vigour, exclaims, "beside the stone of Mora I shall fall asleep;" plainly intimating a place in his own country, which was dear and familiar to his mind by important or delightful associations. These circumstances, however, are merely noticed, for it is impossible that a

reader could believe that Mora was any where but on the sea coast ; and if the words of the poems can be altered in the manner which has certainly been done in this case, the controversy may soon be amicably decided. As it would, however, be by no means proper that this knotty point should rest in its present obscurity, it surely behoves the " Celtic antiquary" to re-examine the original manuscripts, as he is doubtless one of the perpetual trustees to whose especial custody the precious deposits are intrusted.

The Six-mile-
water, the
Lubar of
Ossian.

THE river called the Six-mile-water has also been discovered to be the Lubar of Ossian. The poems do not appear in the least to strengthen such a supposition ; and in a note to the Fifth Book of Temora, there is an explanation of the text which makes the river Lubar fall into the sea. The Six-mile-water runs into Lough Neagh. In an excellent " Sketch of the Road from Belfast to Antrim," written by a person who seems to be extremely well acquainted with the antiquities of the country, this stream is called Owen Neview, or the river of the woods.*

Moilena's
bay, &c.

THE heath of Moilena has likewise been noted as a district near Lough Neagh. It is impossible to

* See the Belfast Magazine, v. iii. p. 276.

reconcile such an account with some expressions in the poems, and particularly with that poetical phrase, "we rushed into Moilena's bay." Moilena is far from the ocean.

MUCH more to the same effect might be brought forward, were it proper to enter into longer trains of argument, or to examine the poems and the country, with more minuteness. The digression, however, has already been too extended, though fully sufficient, it is presumed, to show how untenable, and how absurd, are the proofs adduced in this pamphlet. Instead of confirming the victory of "the Ossianites," they prove, that the cause which has recourse to arguments so remote, and, at best, so unsatisfactory, rests on a most weak and tottering foundation.*

* It is necessary to mention, that these remarks on Ossiano have been made from the critique and extracts of the *Literary Gazette*; and if the author of the production have been reprehended with justice, certainly the critic, who has chimed in to all his errors, should participate in the censure. The *Literary Gazette* affirms that the proofs of the pamphleteer go to demonstrate, (the evidence is mathematical beyond all question) not the arrival of Fingal in Ulster, but the extent of his progress, as well as the reality of his achievements; and that the only difficulty arises from too partial an acquaintance with the country, while the absurdity of some of the arguments in Ossiano might have been shown without any knowledge whatever of the province of Ulster.

Since writing the preceding remarks, I have seen in different publications, an advertisement, purporting, that the author of Ossiano has completed his tour of the Highlands of Scotland, and the North of Ireland; and that he is about to republish the poems of his favourite bard, with geographical notes, illustrative of the scenery, topography, and localities of the father of British poets.

The invaluable present has already been made to the curious public,

Concluding
remarks.

Though it may be impossible to prove, therefore, from any analogy existing between the poems of Ossian and the surrounding country, that this has been the scene of Fingal's exploits, still, it cannot be questioned, from the situation and appearance of these mountains, that they have been places of moment in days of yore. We may therefore truly envy the feelings of him, who, while roving on these hills, imagines that he treads in the footsteps of Cuthullin, or gazes on those rocks which have echoed the warblings of "the sweet sounding voice of Conna." The ardour of a summer's sun ; the intensity of a winter's storm, will produce a world of images. Thought may range far and freely ; may conjure up a hero's shade on every eminence, or a bardic song on every breeze. We may behold with admiration, or with awe, the same scene which thousands of our race, in various stages of civilization, have beheld with wonder or indifference ; the same rocks, and dells, and plains, where they have rioted in savage conviviality, or chased the fierce prey of the mountain and the forest with fearless courage. If it be

but as it had unfortunately not found its way to this part of the country when these sheets were put to press, curiosity must for a short time be restrained. though, no doubt, all the pithy arguments contained in Ossian, with many others of equal cogency, are again presented to the world, with "new dresses and decorations ;" all deep enough, the author I suppose presumes, to satisfy the cravings of such as desire nothing but novelty, or the capacities of those who are to be pleased with plausible nonsense

true that the imagination may be enriched by the contemplation of striking or of memorable objects, then will this place warm the fancy and temper the enthusiasm of the poet's mind.

These, however, are not thoughts for every day's consideration ; and though it would be curious to speculate upon such topics, the distant murmur of some water-wheel or beetling engine might interrupt the romantic reverie. Nor would an acquaintance with the people tend to revive it. They are altogether a new stock ; they know nothing of the former state or history of those whom their forefathers dispossessed. Some of the old and more inquisitive may be able to point out the haunts of the robbers of former times ; and particularly, the dens of that most celebrated of all the Irish rapparees, Redmond O'Hanlon. But those legends and traditions which the true Irish so fondly cherish ; which enthusiasm has continued to preserve, amidst the impetuous extirpations of war, or the more silent ravages of oblivion ; which some can still deliver in regular numbers, and with all the wildness of untaught orators, are here totally unknown, their place being supplied by more important thoughts, and more momentous avocations.

Antiquities.

THIS parish contains none of those magnificent remains of antiquity, to which the diversified scenery of Ireland is so greatly indebted for its beauty; and which have so much contributed to strengthen the opinion, generally received, of its former celebrity. But though these may be wanting, there still exist ample materials for curious and original discussion; equally illustrative of the early state of this island, and not less replete with interesting and valuable reflections.

Caves.

THE caves with which the county of Antrim abounds, and of which there are several in this parish, become properly the first objects of investigation, as they are perhaps of more early origin than any other works which our rude ancestors have left. The most ancient are formed in the earth, and these, it is reasonable to suppose, are of greater antiquity than the more celebrated caverns which have been hewn out of the rocks of the Cave hill, and some other basaltic mountains in this county. Of the former description there are several here, but none of them in a perfect state. There is one on Wolf hill, about three miles west of Belfast, and which is not connected with any other artificial work. It was accidentally discovered more than thirty years ago, and was then so deep that a man could stand upright in it. In

consequence, of the quantities of earth and stones thrown in at the different openings which have been made, its depth has been diminished to little more than two feet. The breadth of this cave, from the opposite sides, is about a yard, and its extent must have been very considerable, as there are now four apertures; the two most distant of which are upwards of thirty feet asunder. It appears to have been constructed by digging a deep trench in the earth, the sides of which have been neatly built up with stones, and then covered with large flat flags, which are still only a few inches distant from the surface of the ground. There is another cave, of a similar kind, situated on a hill in the neighbouring townland of Ballymacgarry. There was an entrance from the top, one of the flat stones which formed its roof having been removed. This, however, was again replaced, and the only spot which remains for the admission of the inquisitive adventurer is wet and inconvenient. It has been frequently explored, and there is an exaggerated account, that no person has yet penetrated to its termination. The depth of this cave is rather greater than that on Wolf hill, its sides are as smoothly built, and the covering equally flat and massive. Both of them are considerably mutilated, and there may be seen, in different parts of the parish, several others in a less perfect condi-

tion, and which will soon, it is probable, be utterly defaced. There is one, however, more complete and extensive than either of those which have been mentioned, situated at Hannahstown, in a field adjoining the chapel. It was searched for concealed pikes at the time of the last rebellion, and afterwards, by order of the magistrate who attended, carefully closed. Since that period, some of the upper stones have, on several occasions, been removed to gratify the curious, but the place is now again entirely shut, and when last I saw it, was covered with a crop of luxuriant corn. From the accounts of the country people, it has several branches or apartments; and the construction is exactly the same with those already described. Small caves are generally found in those circular enclosures, called Danish forts; but it is remarkable, that none of the three which have been noticed are in connection with any other artificial remains. In the numerous forts, which the parish contains, there are many cavities, or rather funnels, of a smaller size than the preceding, but bearing a close resemblance to them in every other respect.

Curious caves
in the Cave
hill.

IN that mountain called the Cave hill there are three caverns, much larger than those just mentioned, and different from them in several other particulars. They are all hollowed out of an immense basaltic cliff, being entirely, or at least very nearly, the work

of art. There may have been at first small excavations, but the mark of the chissel, especially in the second, is plainly discernible. That which is first, or lowest in the rock, is eighteen feet in breadth, from the entrance to the opposite side; twenty-one feet in length, and varying in height, from seven feet to eleven. The second cave is situated a few yards higher in the same cliff, and is of a smaller size, being almost nine feet in length, seven in breadth, and scarcely six in height. Farther up the rock again, is the third cave, which is much more capacious and curious. Its situation, from the perpendicularity of the ascent, and the deficiency of natural supports to assist in the attempt, would deter most persons from undertaking a journey which is truly perilous. From the concurring testimony of different adventurous individuals by whom it has been reached and examined, it is said to consist of two apartments. Of these, the outer is nearly of the same dimensions with the first cave. From this room there branches a narrow passage to the left, terminating in a steep, abrupt descent of two or three yards, and leading to a second chamber, is of still greater extent, and more smoothly cut than any of the others. It is almost thirty feet long, sixteen broad, and more than seven high. At its extremity is a large chink or outlet, scarcely sufficient for the admittance of the human body. This opening shews that the cave does not pene-

trate far into the rock, and it may have served either for the purpose of letting in air, or as a more commodious situation for reconnoitring an enemy than the original entrance.

THE sides of the first cave are tolerably smooth, but the top is extremely rough and disjointed, being composed of stony angular projections, somewhat resembling large masses of crystallized substances. Its entrance is extremely large and unshapen, being in one place seven feet across, and presenting from a short distance a gloomy, or even a terrible appearance. The second cave is more smooth and circular, having a small grassy platform in front; and close beside it is another excavation in the rock, nine feet long, and about four broad. The antiquity of these caverns must be very great, and after the most diligent inquiry it has been impossible to discover any tradition of the residents, or makers of such curious habitations. Some few ascribe them to the Danes; but if questioned farther, it will be found that this is conjecture, and not tradition. Except the third, they could not have afforded any secure concealment. The first is low in situation, and is visible almost at the distance of two miles. Not is there at present any traditional evidence to support the assertion, that Cuthullin once resided in these caves, this being, indeed, a species of proof,

which among the present inhabitants would not be very likely to exist.

With respect, however, to the uses of those caves which have been dug in the earth, various suppositions have been made. It is well known that the ancient Germans, Britons, and Irish used what might properly be translated *earth habitations*, and which are commonly supposed to have been in winter their permanent residence. Sir James Ware and Molyneux oppose the opinion, that the caves or vaults in forts could ever have served for dwellings, because of their extreme narrowness, and the want of any passage for light or smoke, but rather for store-houses or places of temporary concealment. This account is very rational, though there are certainly many dens formed in the earth in different parts of Ireland, which, from their size and several other satisfactory proofs, have undoubtedly been inhabited. Except those in the Cave hill, there are none here capable at present of affording any of the conveniencies which would be required in such cases. It is most probable, indeed, that the ancient Irish lived only in the larger caves; and those in this parish, from their size, structure, and commanding situations, seem rather to have been used as places of concealment or ambuscade. That on Wolf hill is completely adapted for such a purpose, and a view of the surrounding country might be ob-

Uses, &c. of
the caves.

tained from it by a person entirely hidden from observation. But they may also have been applied, on different occasions, to various uses. One which was discovered some years ago in this parish, but which is now destroyed, contained a number of bones resembling those of sheep. It has likewise been conjectured, and probably with truth, that they have in later times been chiefly serviceable for securing from plunder the corn and other provisions of the poorer Irish during the wars which so long agitated this kingdom.

Forts.

THE low forts, generally said to have been constructed by the Danes, or considered at least as military antiquities, are found in extraordinary numbers in this parish. They are most frequently situated between the town of Belfast and the mountains, and are particularly numerous at the foot of Squire's hill. In general, they are low and circular, either surrounded with trenches, or retaining marks of having been formerly possessed of such defences, which remain in some cases so complete as to be yet filled with water. With the exception of Mac Art's Fort, there are none here remarkable for their size. They are not more than from five to twelve feet in height, and always lower towards the centre than at the outer side. Their number, in particular places, the caves or holes which many of them contain, and the fine views which they universally command, are



MAC ART'S FORT

FROM THE SUMMIT OF THE CLIFFS TO THE N.E.

probably all, as to their external appearance, which will now attract the attention of the curious observer.

THE celebrated Mac Art's Fort, on the Cave hill, Mac Art's
fort. is the largest and best known in this parish. There is, however, neither record or tradition to inform us when or by whom it was made. Many chieftains of the name of Mac Art, belonging to the O'Neil family, who so long possessed this country, are mentioned in Irish history, so that it has probably been constructed by one of these for protection and defence. This fort is partly natural, and partly artificial, a high and perpendicular basaltic rock composing one of its sides, the other being formed in the same manner as those at the foot of the mountains, but with the ditch and trench of vastly greater depth. The summit is neither smooth nor circular. The edges, particularly next the rock, are broken and uneven; but the whole circumference, as well as it can be calculated, is about two hundred yards.*

* Near the centre is a large hole of a dry gravelly soil, called the Giant's Punch Bowl, a very incongruous name. The punch bowl, however, has lately received a vast addition to its dimensions, owing to the havoc of a certain adventurer, assisted by a number of persons unknown, who heard, or dreamed, or fancied that they were destined to be the discoverers of hidden treasure. This was the greatest of several attempts that had been made in the same place, and for the same purpose. For one whole day spades, mattocks, and shovels were in requisition; the labour was vast; the hopes were great; now elevated; now depressed. The rocks re-echoed to the lusty stroke; the spirit of Cuthullin stood aghast; the "misty Cromla" had never

The fort itself is a conspicuous object to the country for many miles around; and its formation has undoubtedly cost vast labour. The passage across the ditch is still of great height and solidity, and has been made by leaving part of the ground remaining when the fosse was dug. As a place of security it must have been of great importance, and the side which is formed of rocks would, in early times, even if weakly defended, have been totally impregnable. The situation is not less picturesque than bold and commanding; nor could the most watchful enemy approach, either by sea or land, without attracting observation from its stern and towering summit.

Fort William.

THERE is one fort in this parish of a very different nature from all the rest, both in point of shape and date. It is about sixty feet square, and furnished not only with a deep ditch, but with bastions or flankers at the corners. It is situated near the shore, one mile and a half from Belfast, and, according to tradition, was an intrenchment thrown up by King William in his progress through this kingdom. Close beside this fort is another of the more ancient kind, with a cave in the centre, which has never been explored, being generally filled with water.

seen such doings; and the news soon spread "over Lena's rustling heath." It was the effort of a day, and nothing more; "gloomy and sad" returned the hero of the piece, and his coadjutors followed, "humming surly songs."

THE universal tradition which attributes these forts to the Danes, is probably, in part at least, correct. We know, however, from the researches of antiquaries, that they were also made by the Irish, both before and after the arrival of these invaders. From various circumstances, there is reason to think that the smaller forts were not used either by Irish or Danes as stations of defence. Their situation, in general, could not have been very favourable for such a purpose; nor could they from their lowness and small size have either opposed, for any length of time, the progress of assailants, or accommodated a sufficient number of men to repel their attacks. It would have been by no means judicious for the carrying on of a defensive war to have relied on fortifications, too numerous and inconsiderable, to offer any effectual resistance. It is a common observation, that from one, another may be seen, a circumstance which certainly indicates, that their use has been rather for peace than war. The earth of which they are composed is always extremely black and rich; domestic utensils are occasionally found at them, which prove, at least, that they have not been temporary habitations. Besides, in times when peace and safety were best to be procured by strength, it is natural to think that forts or elevations of this kind would present the most simple and most commodious places of security. A petty chief might collect

Origin, &c. of
the forts.

at night his dependants and cattle into one of these, and, protected by a palisade of wicker work, and by the vicinity of many neighbours similarly situated, might rest in freedom from any great or immediate danger.* This opinion is not new, but will perhaps be found more generally satisfactory than any which has yet been offered. The various sizes of these forts too might be accounted for by supposing them to have been possessed by chiefs of different degrees of power and authority. Though it may appear then that most of them have been originally made for habitations, it by no means follows that the larger raths have not often or entirely served as military stations.

Stone arrow
heads.

DETACHED pieces of antiquity, belonging properly to the remote and barbarous periods of Irish history, are also found here in great numbers. The most common, and probably the most ancient, are

* There are often found branches of trees in the ditches of forts, which is a strong corroboration of the opinion above expressed.

A new conjecture, however, has lately been made as to their use, which certainly seems very improbable. In that excellent Account of Glenavy, &c. in the Second Volume of Mason's Statistical Survey of Ireland, it is said that these forts were similar to our present chapels of ease, for the convenience of those who were distant from the great temples. Nothing surely could be more wildly hypothetical than this. It is altogether impossible that they could have been intended for religious purposes, their number is so amazingly great. It is usual to hear persons observe that not a farm is without one; and I have seen in this parish two in a single field of no great size. If such a supposition could be established, it would form a weighty argument in favour of Mr. O'Halloran's opinion, that this island was called *Insula Sanctorum* before the introduction of Christianity.

stone arrow-heads. That these were used in war, their appearance, their number, and the practice of the American savages at this day, would seem indisputably to prove. It would be difficult, however, to convince many persons of this truth. They are sharp at the point, and though rough, or even somewhat indented at the edges, would from their weight, if sent with velocity, inflict a dangerous wound. They are of different sizes, commonly about an inch in length, sometimes two; while others again are so extremely small and thin, though still well proportioned, that they could have little influence on the human body, and may perhaps have been used for the destruction of birds, or other small animals. Many of these weapons are considerably polished, and when in a perfect state, have always a part of the flint projecting by which they might be attached to the arrows. There are some, however, occasionally procured of a very different kind, exactly resembling a lozenge in shape, though in other respects similar to the former, and possessing as many varieties of size.

HATCHETS of stone are also found in this parish, but are not so numerous as the former. They are sometimes made of white flint, but more frequently of a black close grained stone, which is often so smooth as to render it probable that the instruments have been formed, or at least finished, by friction. They

Stone
hatchets.

are often mistaken for weavers' rub-stones, a purpose indeed to which they are in many cases applied ; but from their shape, and the sharpness which they still retain, have undoubtedly been used as offensive weapons.

Brasen celts,
 &c.

THE brasen celts, which have occasioned so much disputation, are probably of a less ancient date. The instruments to which this name is sometimes restricted, are much longer than modern hatchets, in proportion to their breadth, and are without any hole by which they might be affixed to a shaft or handle. There is a sort of groove at the top, on each of the flat sides, by which it is rendered doubtful in what manner they have been used, whether for thrusting like a sword, or striking as an axe. These celts vary greatly in their form and appearance, many being flat, and having no grooves on their sides. There are also other warlike weapons very different in shape, but made of the same metal. The most common bear a considerable resemblance to hatchets, but are of greater breadth, and furnished with sockets so deep and large, as to make the instruments almost entirely hollow. There is likewise a kind of hook or ring attached to them, which, it has been conjectured, was intended for stringing a number together ; or more probably, to hold a thong, for the purpose of drawing back the weapon when engaged with an enemy in close combat.

The common celts, are most frequently discovered in this parish. The substance of which they are composed is extremely hard, and, except steel, takes perhaps an edge of greater keenness than any metal of modern times.

It will next be necessary to notice the Danes' Dane's pipes. pipes, which are found here in amazing numbers, generally in the ditches of old forts. They are made of clay, and are not so long as those used at present. The bowl or oup, however, is considerably larger, and grows gradually smaller from the middle towards the two ends. If these pipes were intended for smoking, their astonishing number would certainly seem to imply an overwhelming swarm of invaders, or that the practice was common among the whole inhabitants of the country.*

QUERN stones also are sometimes dug up in this parish. They have an exact resemblance to the shape of a common grinding stone, for which they

* If these pipes belonged to the Danes, as their name would appear to prove, it is another proof of the universality and antiquity of that most absurd of all practices, smoking. If this be the case, it becomes a matter worthy of the inquiry of the antiquary, what root or herb was used for the purpose. Though they come under the denomination of *cutties*, and from their shortness are rather inconvenient, they have been repeatedly tried, and have been found, to use a technical term, to *draw* to admiration. From the shape of the bowl this might be expected; but it is certainly a curious subject of speculation, to see a civilized man of the present age, using for the same purpose, the very instrument which had graced the mouth of a savage a thousand years before.

are often substituted ; and it has been ascertained, that they have been used for the bruising of corn before the invention of more expeditious mills.

Cairns.

THERE was formerly a cairn on the top of each of the high mountains in this parish. They do not appear in general to have been large originally, and at present are much disfigured, the outer stones being removed for building ditches. There is a monument of this kind on the Cave hill, one on Squire's hill, another on Colin-ward, and a fourth on the Black mountain, called the Giant's Grave. This latter is nearly destroyed ; but, according to the testimony of several persons, the place resembled a large grave, with a headstone, which is still to be seen, marked with several strokes, both perpendicular and horizontal. But the largest cairn which the parish contains, is near its western extremity, on a hill beyond Devis. It is called Carn Sean Buidhe, or the Cairn of Yellow John, and is probably the rude mausoleum of some unremembered chieftain, who has been great and mighty in his day.

Antiquity
and uses, &c.
of cairns.

MUCH has been written to show the antiquity and uses of these cairns, as well as their agreement with similar memorials among all the ancient nations of the world. There is not a doubt of their having been used, at least on many occasions, as cemeteries for the dead. The most direct and unanswerable

proof in support of this is derived from the fact, that they often contain human bones, and other emblems of mortality. This, however, does not prove that their uses may not have been various, or that heaps of stones were not raised in rude ages for purposes altogether different. The cairn on the Cave hill, for instance, is ascribed by tradition to have been erected for the commemoration of a battle which was fought at the place where it stands. Just on the borders of this parish, but rather in Templepatrick, are the remains of a very considerable monument of this kind called Cat Cairn, or The Heap of Battle. It is not situated on an eminence, like the others which have been mentioned, but in a level plain between the Glen hill and another low mountain in the parish of Templepatrick. The place is well chosen for a field of battle. The two parties might have encamped on opposite heights, and descended into the small plain, which is large enough for a few hundred men to engage. The stones may have been afterwards heaped up, not only to serve as a tomb for the slain, but as a memorial of the conflict. There is a second cairn adjoining this, but of a much smaller size, and probably covering either some warrior whose achievements merited particular honour, or else been raised over the remains of that party which conquered or which was vanquished in the conflict. There is no tradition to inform us when this battle was fought, but it has certainly been at some very

remote period. The greater part of the stones have been removed for enclosures, but the ground around it is yet unbroken by the husbandman.

THERE are many arguments brought forward, particularly by Mr. Harris, to show that cairns have been raised for the establishment of covenants, federal sanctions, and several other civil and religious purposes. His proofs are certainly both striking and cogent ; and though cairns have undoubtedly been in many, perhaps in most cases, rude sepulchres, they may often have been consecrated also by religious rites, and from the situations in which they are generally erected, must have kept the importance, as well as the greatness of the events which produced them, in strong and perpetual remembrance.

Ecclesiastical
antiquities.

OF ecclesiastical antiquities this parish is at present remarkably barren. It was not, however, always in such a state, though it never contained any abbey or monastery. The principal religious edifice that belonged to this place, but of which not a vestige has existed within the memory of any person living, was the Church at Shankill, about a mile north west from Belfast. It was formerly called the Church of St. Patrick, at the *White Ford*, and from this name is supposed to have been founded by our tutelar apostle. It was also denominated Shankill

Shankill
church.

or the Old Church, to distinguish it from others in the neighbourhood. Previous to the Reformation it had been attached to the Priory of Down; and after that event to the Deanery of Clandermont.* The only relic which now remains of its existence is a weighty stone sunk in the earth of the graveyard, out of which is cut a large circular cavity. This is said by tradition to have been the font; and as it is generally filled with water, the power of healing trifling diseases is superstitiously attributed to it by some old people.†

* The authority for these curious particulars is a Terrier or Ledger Book, in manuscript, of the Bishopric of Down and Connor, written about the year 1604, shewing the state of the diocese at that period. The words are "*Ecclesia de St. Patricii de vado albo*—the Prior of Downe hath it—six alterages—and the Church is called Shankill—The Vicar pays in Provs. 10sh. in Refecna. 10sh. Synoda. 2 sh."

The above appellation of the "white ford" is partly explained by the circumstance, that a small stream runs beside the place where the church formerly stood. There is now a bridge over this river, which, when a ford, either flowed near a white limestone bottom, or it has received the title from some other of those trifling but now forgotten causes from which the names of places generally originate.

† From its situation this ancient relic may very soon be covered with earth, and probably to the present age altogether lost, so that it might be well worth the attention of the curious to have it raised up and preserved. I have been informed by a staunch Catholic, that such an attempt was made a great many years ago by some of his Protestant brethren, but that, though no visible power prevented them, and though the stone appeared to be neither very large nor very heavy, they were obliged, in a short time, to desist and fly, from the unceremonious interference of agents, similar to that which prostrated the dwarf of song when trying to undo the clasps of Michael Scott's Book.

Though it is mentioned above that no part of the church remains, an enormous foundation stone was discovered last year in making a grave. It was of so great a size that it required to be blasted with gunpowder.

THE ancient burying place called Friar's Bush, about a mile south from Belfast, was also the site of a religious house, which has been long destroyed. In Gough's Camden we are told, that St. Darerca, a sister of St. Patrick, was abbess of a nunnery in Linn, a spacious plain near Carrickfergus, pleasantly seated on the river Lagan. This description certainly applies much better to Friar's Bush than to the place to which it has been sometimes referred, which is near Larne, and very far distant from the Lagan. There was afterwards, however, a Chapel of Ease here, attached to Shankill, and called Capella de Kilpatrick, or the Chapel of Patrick's Church. It is thus adverted to in the Terrier: "Capella de Kilpatrick; above Moses Hill's house, at Strondmillers (Strandmills)—it pays not—Shankill pays for it," &c.

Capella de
Kilpatrick.

THIS Terrier throws very considerable light on the early ecclesiastical state of the parish of Belfast, and shows the importance of Shankill Church by the comparatively lengthened notice which is taken of it, particularly by the word "*alterages*," which occurs in no other part of the manuscript whatever. All the other terms in the preceding note, relative to Shankill, are well understood; but *alterages* appears to be of more difficult explanation. It strictly means, altars erected within parochial churches for the purpose of singing of mass for deceased friends.

But in this case, there are some grounds for supposing that the altars, or alterages, were not within the parish church, but rather at convenient distances from it ; for it appears, that besides Shankill and Kilpatrick, there were at least three other religious houses in the parish of Belfast, and probably some more which cannot now be discovered, so that the term in question had very possibly some allusion to these places. It is proper to mention, farther, that the word has either had different significations, or has not yet been satisfactorily explained. In a parliament held at Drogheda, in the reign of Edward IV. the Earls of Desmond and Kildare were attainted of high treason, and one of the chief crimes with which they were charged was fostering and *alterage* with the King's Irish enemies. In Baron Finglass's Breviate, also, there is an account of a law, by which it is made criminal for any Irishman to compel an Englishman to go to his *alterage*.

Of these religious establishments, however, there is only one noticed in the Terrier in the following terms : " Capella de Crookmuck—the Abbots of Bangor—Shankill is the vicar and pays for it." In an Ancient Map of the County of Antrim, it is called Croach Moch, and placed in Malone, near New Forge. It is entirely impossible, however, at present to discover the site of this build-

ing : but from that district between the town of Belfast and the Lagan river being called Cromack, it has been supposed that the names have some connection.

Cranog.

Of the other religious edifices which formerly belonged to this pariah, the principal was situated about two miles from Belfast, near the present Falls road. It is said to have been called Cranog, which signifies *the young plantation*. There is scarcely a vestige of the building in existence ; but there is a very ancient burying ground at the place, which is now known by the name of Callender's Fort. At the extremity of the parish below Suffolk House was another of these small churches. It

Kilwee, &c.

was denominated Kilwee or *the church at the burying place*. There is nothing whatever known of its former state, except some traditions, that stones with crosses, and other sculptured marks, were raised at the spot ; and that the place was formerly the principal receptacle for the Roman Catholics of the adjoining mountains to bury their dead. It shows, however, the fleeting nature of some traditions, that though there have been undoubtedly houses of worship at both these places, and that though it is probably not more than seventy or eighty years since they were used as grave-yards, their existence is utterly unknown, ex-

cept to the very old inhabitants who have lived from their infancy at the exact spot.

THOUGH this parish at present contains no castle, Castle. or any other civil or military remains of antiquity, of much importance, there is reason to think that there were formerly at least five fortifications here, all however inconsiderable, except the castle of Belfast. Of this building, and that of which the present chapel of ease occupies the site, all the information which it has been possible to collect has already been given. The next most considerable was probably Green Castle, Greencastle. situated more than two miles from Belfast, on that beautiful bank formerly described, which extends along the shore. The only fragment of this castle is a piece of thick wall, overgrown with ivy, nor does the building appear to have been at any time of much magnitude. It seems to have formed rather a fortified camp of great size, being surrounded for a considerable distance with very high and deep outworks, or intrenchments of earth. Very little is known of its history.* It is marked in Speed's Maps under the name of Benma-digang, a corrupt Irish term signifying "Eoghain's

* In the County Survey, it is stated, in giving an account of this place, that a law was passed to prohibit any but an Englishman from being governor of Greencastle. This, however, is an error, as the order mentioned did not allude to the small building in this county, but to Greencastle in the county of Down, as will be seen by referring to Harris's History, p. 12.

habitation on the level head land." This not only describes the situation of the place, but renders it probable that it had been built or occupied by an Irish chief of that name, and the adjoining townland is still called Ballyaghagain.

Castle Combe. WHERE Shaw's bridge now crosses the Lagan, there was formerly a ford, which was secured in ancient times by two high forts, still to be seen on each bank of the river. There was afterwards a castle of lime and stone, built probably by the English on the western side near Malone House, but of which very little can be told. In 1610 it was called Freerstone, and was a place of considerable consequence. It had been granted to some of Elizabeth's officers, but probably fell into disuse and ruins, when the peace of the country introduced more commodious and ornamental dwellings. The name by which it was last known was Castle Combe, but the principal part of the walls was removed at an early period for the erection of Shaw's bridge, as formerly stated.

**Castle at
Strandmills.**

THERE was another building of a similar kind at Strandmills, possessed by some of the Hill family. It also has been long since entirely demolished, though some of the old inhabitants recollect the ruins of walls or arches, which had received from tradition the name of "Sir Moses's Cellars."

THERE are no coins of a very ancient date found here. Those of Edward I. and II. occasionally occur. Some years ago, in a field which did not appear to have been ever ploughed, and in a black spot which had probably been the site of a house, there were discovered about a dozen silver pennies of one of these kings. Coins of Henry VIII. Elizabeth, James I. and Charles I. are very numerous. Many pieces of Louis XIII. are also found, made of copper, less than a farthing in size, and generally dated 1640-41-42. These coins, but more particularly those of Elizabeth, are generally found in lots, and often mixed with Spanish money of rude workmanship.

THERE have not been, as far as is known, any *unique* pieces of antiquity met with in this parish, which could be mentioned on unexceptionable authority. Our bogs, as might be expected from their high situation, contain none of those remarkable artificial remains which are sometimes discovered in such places. Notwithstanding these circumstances, however, and though the place cannot boast of any abbey, castle, or other magnificent ruin, it yet presents many relics of antiquity, well meriting the attention of those who are inclined to speculate on such interesting and instructive topics.

Account of
some remark-
able antiqui-
ties in the
neighbour-
hood of Bel-
fast Parish.

To extend this part of the subject, and to render it more generally interesting, it has been thought suitable to enter into a brief account of some remarkable antiquities in the neighbourhood of Belfast parish, because the inquiry is, to use very little liberty of expression, wholly original, and because the objects of it deserve to be rescued from that neglect in which they have hitherto been suffered to remain.

THE most striking antiquities, perhaps, or at least on account of their number, the most deserving of precedence in this place, are three of those monuments generally considered temples of druidical worship, but which differ considerably from each other. Of these, the first which shall be described, is that stupendous work, 'called the Giant's Ring, in the parish of Drumbo, county of Down, and four miles from the town of Belfast. It consists of an enormous circle, perfectly level, about five hundred and eighty feet in diameter, or nearly one third of an Irish mile in circumference. This vast ring is enclosed by an immense mound or parapet of earth, upwards of eighty feet in breadth at the base, and though in the lapse, it is probable, of nearly two thousand years, the height of this bank must have much decreased, it is still so great as to hide the surrounding country, except the tops of the mountains, entirely from the view, and in its original state



DOMESTIC ALTAR IN THE GLANT'S RING.

there is not a doubt but they also were invisible. Near the centre of the circle stands a *cromlech*, or rude altar of stone ; and whether the proofs that such monuments were used in the idolatrous adoration of the sun be, or be not satisfactory, it is a circumstance which deserves to be remembered, that the Giant's Ring would exclude from the gaze of a mistaken multitude every object but the glorious luminary himself whose beams they worshipped. It is a place which is calculated to inspire an uninformed druid with additional superstition, or with the necessity of increased mortification ; and they who formed it had a just conception of those human feelings which are extensive in their influence, powerful in their operation, and most deeply to be moved by external nature.

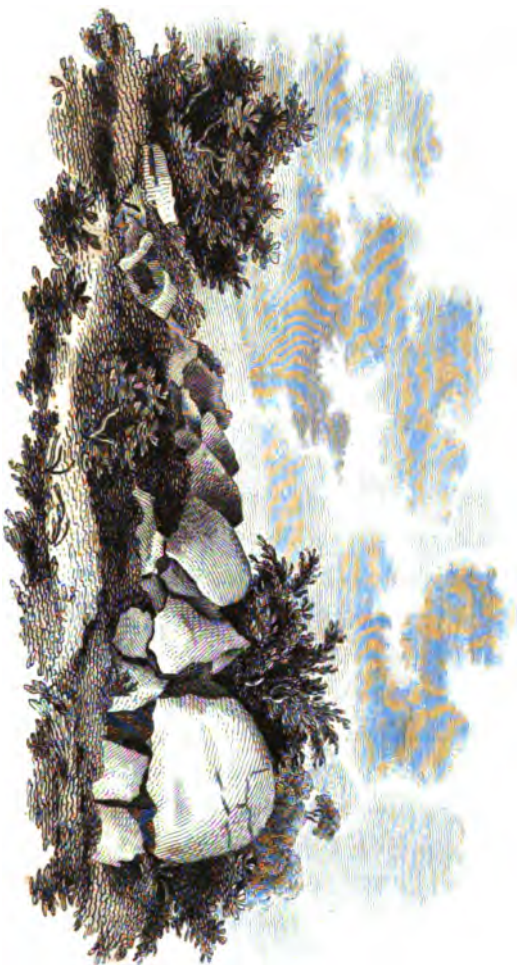
THE sloping stone of the altar is almost circular, being seven feet in one direction, six and a half in the other, and upwards of a foot in thickness at the edges, but in the centre considerably more. This *cromlech* is either very erroneously described by Mr. Harris, or its appearance has greatly altered since the year 1744. We are informed in the History of the County Down, that two ranges of pillars, each consisting of seven, support this monstrous rock, beside which there are several other stones fixed upright in the ground, at the distance of about four

feet. Of these latter there remains but one ; the upper stone at present rests upon four, and not upon fourteen supporters ; the entire number which composes the altar is only ten, and though it is probable that several may have fallen down, or in some other manner changed their position, it is inconceivable how so great a disproportion as the two accounts present could ever be reconciled.

Druidical
altar at
Rough Port.

SEVEN miles from the town of Belfast, in the parish of Templepatrick, and a few perches off the high road which leads to Antrim, is a temple of a similar kind, in some respects even more curious than the former. The first stone is very little elevated above the surface of the ground, but followed by a number of others, which form, for the length of forty feet, a gradual ascent, ending in one of greater magnitude, raised and supported like that at the Giant's Ring. The stones of which this work is composed are not very broad, but extremely heavy, round and smooth, somewhat resembling huge pebbles. There is an account, that it was formerly surrounded with an earthen ditch, and that very near the altar was found a large bowl or basin of brass, but which was so much corroded that it fell to pieces in cleaning.

THERE is no tradition which might illustrate the origin of this curious remnant of antiquity. The



DRUIDICAL ALTAR AT ROUGEL FORT,
PAR. OF TEMPT. PATRICK.

name indeed by which it is frequently distinguished throws some light on the subject. It is often denominated *Carn Graine*, or "The heap of the Sun." Others again call it "the Giant's Grave," or "the Granny's Grave." The situation in which it stands does not present any thing remarkable, but the length adds greatly to the novelty of its appearance. Immediately adjoining stands a tall conical moat or rath, much disfigured on the summit, and a small village called Rough Fort.

ABOUT five miles from Belfast, some distance to the right of the public road leading from that town to Newtownards, there exists a monument which seems to have attracted even less observation than those which have been described. It is called the Kempe Stones, and consists of an enormous rock, eight feet and a half in length, and nearly of an equal breadth, borne in a sloping posture by three other stones; but as one of these rests upon two additional masses, there may properly be reckoned five supporters. The two which are in front resemble pillars, and are overhung by the huge body which they sustain. This upper stone is in one place five feet thick, but gradually diminishes to the end, and has been computed to weigh forty tons.

It might occasion considerable discussion to prove how so great a weight could have been raised

by a people ignorant of the arts. But it should be remembered, that the mechanic powers are as simple as they are efficacious, and that the united efforts of a multitude, with the assistance of the lever and inclined plane, would be sufficient to elevate even a more ponderous mass. This, however, is still an amazing work, and would be attended with inconceivable labour in any age. It is much less difficult, indeed, to discover the manner of its erection than the purpose for which it was intended. It might be considered at first sight a druidical altar, like that at the Giant's Ring; but there are circumstances to justify the opinion, that its use or origin has been in some respects different. In many parts of this kingdom, when the outer stones are removed from those cairns or heaps, which have been proved to be tombs, monuments similar to this are frequently discovered. Now, the place at present described was formerly of greater magnitude, the numerous stones of different sizes which are scattered around it on all sides, being conclusive proofs of such a statement. If it be hard to imagine why so much labour has been bestowed on what was intended to be concealed, are not the pyramids of the Egyptians, and the grandeur still accompanying the inhumation of the great, sufficient answers? and perhaps, like many other tombs or vaults, the Kempe Stones, and other piles of a similar kind, may have been altogether or partly raised during the life

THE KEMPLE STONES, PARISH OF NEWTONARDS.



of the person for whom they were designed. It does appear then most probable, that this now under consideration is one of those which the ancient Irish denominated "eternal houses." The appearance of this great monument well corresponds with such a title, and it will continue in its present state, when edifices of a more beautiful but a more fragile architecture shall have crumbled into dust. According to tradition, also, it is the tomb of a giant who was conquered, and interred at the place by a fellow-monster, the townland being called Green Graves. The name likewise bears on the same point, Kempe, in Anglo-Saxon, signifying a warrior.* With the present addition therefore to the word it may justly be considered, the stones or heap of the warrior.

THIS part of the country is famous for its remains of antiquity. At the distance of a mile from the Kempe Stones, there is one of those tall conical mounts, the uses of which are so much involved in obscurity. It is called Dundonnell, and has been the occasion of many absurd stories among the vulgar.

Mount at
Dundonnell,
&c.

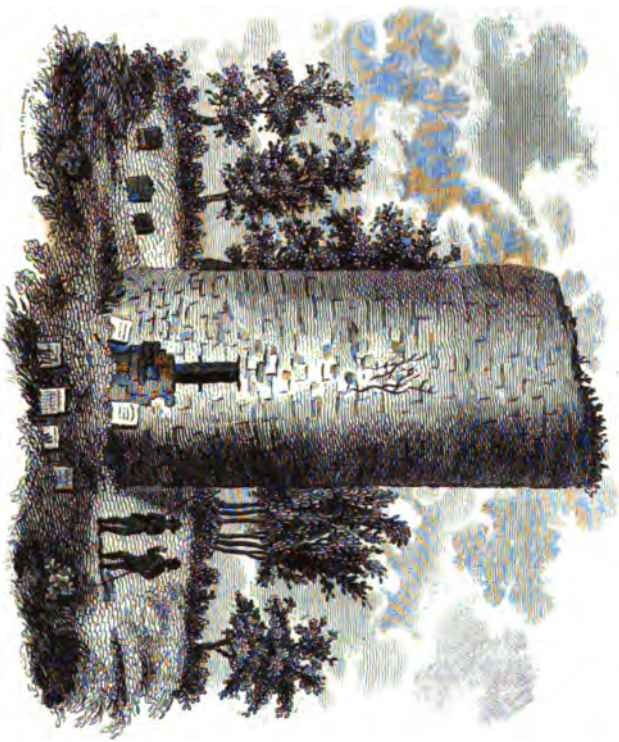
NOT far from this, near the bank of a small rivulet, there is a pillar, about ten feet in height, formed

* *Anthologia Hibernica*, vol. i, p. 342.

of one rough stone, supposed by credulous people to cover a treasure of the most precious of all metals, and to turn round every midnight at crowing of the cock.

Origin, &c. of
the crom-
lechs.

THE origin of these *cromlechs* has given rise to much ingenious speculation. Little new light can be thrown upon the matter, for as there is only one principal opinion which seems to be borne out by all the arguments that have been yet advanced, it is not probable that any conjecture more plausible will readily be found. That they were intended for Druids' altars, or for some important religious purpose, is the hypothesis which is generally credited; but it is certain that the uses of the *cromlech*, as well as of the cairns and pillar stones, cannot be defined in a precise, or at least in a convincing manner. They bear, in many respects, so much resemblance to each other, that none of them perhaps have been appropriated to any single purpose. Many strong and satisfactory proofs have been adduced by learned antiquaries, to show the affinity of the cairns and pillar stones with memorials accurately and frequently noticed in the Old Testament, and generally reared for the establishment of covenants of different kinds. If those commonly denominated Druids' altars were really designed for religious purposes, it is difficult to conceive in what manner sacrifice has been performed; or, if for con-



ROUND TOWER AT DRUMBO.

veying instruction to an assembled multitude, why so much labour should be expended in raising structures of a very inconsiderable height. When the pillar stones are formed into circular enclosures, a more specious conjecture than that they were rude temples cannot perhaps be discovered ; and it certainly appears most probable, as proofs at present stand, that the Giant's Ring and the Rough Fort have been consecrated, in dark and distant ages, to purposes of a similar description.

THE only round tower, at that distance to which it is proper to extend the present investigation, is in the parish of Drumbo, and six miles from Belfast. Its altitude is about thirty-five feet, but there is an irregularity at the top, one side being somewhat higher than the other. The lower part overhangs its base several inches ; the rest is perpendicular. There is no tradition, however, as to the time when this tower was so much reduced in size. Its diameter is almost nine feet, and its outer circumference, at the base, nearly eighteen yards. The walls are therefore extremely thick and massive. There are three rows of holes in the interior, at regular distances ; and in the side which is highest another cavity, which had probably corresponding apertures when the building was complete. The entrance, the lower part of which is more than a yard from the base of the tower, is five feet eight inches in height,

Drumbo
Round
Tower.

and upwards of a foot and a half in breadth. This tower stands in a grave-yard, and there was formerly an abbey here founded by St. Patrick, which afterwards became a church in the diocese of Down, but of which there is at present scarcely any part remaining.

Observations
on Round
Towers.

THERE are no antiquities in this kingdom which have so much perplexed the antiquaries as the round towers. Of the three old hypotheses on this subject, that of their Phenician origin, though supported by several curious arguments, is certainly, on the whole, the most incredible. Neither of the other two, however, is at all sufficient to explain the numerous objections which may be raised against them. It is impossible that lonely ascetics, wrapt in gloomy superstition, and in mortified weakness, could have possessed the power or the means of raising structures so vast and ponderous, when the materials were so difficult to be procured. It is, perhaps, equally preposterous, to imagine that our Irish ecclesiastics, so wise and shrewd in other matters, should build, or cause to be built such towers for the trifling purpose of holding bells, while they themselves were contented to shiver in a church of wood or wattles. Though there have been some other conjectures and arguments on the subject, particularly in a late work of much ingenuity, the inquiry is yet, and perhaps will for ever remain, in impenetrable uncertainty.



WHITE ABBEY.

THE only ruin of importance, as an ecclesiastical edifice, in the immediate vicinity of Belfast parish, is called White Abbey. It is beautifully situated near the foot of Carnmoney mountain, and not far from the sea. The ruins of this building are still considerable, and its original extent has been very great. From its state and structure there is reason to think, that this abbey once presented the form of a cross; and the part now remaining is probably the eastern wing, which is in tolerable preservation. It has three very long and narrow windows fronting the sea; the wall around, and between them, is darkened with a dense growth of ivy, which communicates a solemn, but not a gloomy appearance. Unlike some other religious houses in this kingdom, White Abbey is not adorned with cut stone, or any other ornament. It is remarkable, however, that of this edifice, which, from its appearance and the number of foundations still to be traced, must have been of some importance, no particulars, either respecting its founder, or any other information, have been transmitted to us, though in Speed's Map the place is largely and accurately laid down under its present name.

TRADITION can give no farther intelligence on the subject than that it was attached, or belonged to Woodburn; and that the monks, when expelled at

the Reformation from Carrickfergus abbies, came up and resided for a time here in great numbers. If this be correct, it is probable that they carried great part of their wealth with them. From the accounts of different persons, various articles, particularly coins, have been dug up in the adjoining fields; and nearer the ruins some years ago, when raising a large stone shaped like a trough, several images of silver, and a wide shallow cup of the same metal, are said to have been discovered.

There is a singular tradition respecting the place at which this abbey stands. It is believed that a great city formerly existed here, called "the city of Coole." Near the building many foundations can certainly be traced; and great broad stones are frequently found forming the remains of roads covered and concealed by the earth. This tradition, like many others, is but a modern fiction engrafted on some ancient truth; but it is now impossible to dis-unite them.

Monkstown.

Not far from this was another religious house called Monkstown, which is also, like White Abbey, unnoticed in the Monasticon, or elsewhere. It does not appear, however, at any time, to have been of much extent. There is a curious and general tradition among the people, that Fergus I. King of Scotland, was buried here, and some even yet pre-

tend to point out the spot. There is a very ancient grave-yard at this place, still occasionally used by the Roman Catholic families in the neighbourhood. The situation of Monkstown, enclosed by a small rivulet, and surrounded with the remains of old orchards and garden walls, is extremely beautiful.

AT the distance of two miles and a half from Belfast, on the old road to Holywood, there was formerly a religious house called Collumbkill, which, as it is laid down by Speed, was, it is probable, originally an abbey, but afterwards converted into a church. There was attached to it a very extensive burying place, the numerous tomb-stones of which have been, however, principally used many years ago, in flagging a house in the neighbourhood; and almost the only one which remains is of a very curious description. Tradition positively ascribes it to have been that which covered the remains of Conn O'Neill, of Castlereagh, the most powerful chieftain of that name who resided in this part of the country; and who, from having been the last Irish proprietor of the parish of Belfast, requires to have his history more particularly recorded.

Collumbkill

THE church was probably founded by one of Conn's predecessors, and appears, perhaps from its proximity to their castle, to have been particularly appropriated to the use of the family. It was situ-

ated in one of the finest and most beautiful spots in the whole county, the surface exactly resembling the rich hills of Malone. Though the place now belongs to Hollywood, it was formerly a parish in itself, and afterwards united to Knock. The Terrier, already referred to, has the following notice on the subject: "Ecclesia de Knockcolmakill, a union, and hath half a townland in glebe, pays in prox. 5sh. Refecto. 5sh. Synods. 2 sh., &c." The last part of the building was only removed some months since. There is also a great conical mount here, on the top of which is built a tall house, not less singular in shape than in situation. It may be remarked, that there are four churches in this neighbourhood, Knock, Collumbkill, Dundonnel and Hollywood, each of which has one of these high raths or tumuli not many yards distant.

Tombstone of
Conn O'Neil.

THE tombstone, lying at present in an unregarded spot, is probably but a part of the original. It is a block of freestone without any lettered inscription; but on it is very skilfully carved, in high relief, the figure of a cross, and apparently some ornamental appendages. There is another stone of the same size, built in the gable of an adjoining house, cut in a similar manner, but with rather a different image. The most curious object on this latter is a detached impression, very nearly resembling a pair of scis-

sors ; or rather, it has been thought, cross swords or daggers.

THE dwelling of this branch of the O'Neils was at Castlereagh, which was early inhabited, according to Harris, by one of the great families of that name, called Hugh Flain,* whose posterity, he informs us, enjoyed the baronies of the Great Ards, Belfast, Carrickfergus, Massereene and Toome. Its last occupant, however, of this illustrious sept was Conn, whose downfall from the possession of a principality, almost to the total extinction of his name, is as striking an example of the mutability of human affairs as many which have been held up for the wonder and instruction of mankind.

IT appears from the Grand Inquisition of the County Down, that in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, this chief enjoyed, in direct possession, besides sub-territories, two hundred and forty-four townlands, valuable for their natural excellencies at the time, and at present, it is generally thought, the most opulent and most improved part of this island. O'Neil, however, had probably been concerned in the rebellions of the period ; his large possessions were beheld with avidity by artful or necessitous adventurers, and a pretence perhaps eagerly desired as

Account of
Conn O'Neil.

* Harris's Down, p. 269.

an excuse for spoliation. In the year 1808, he had been confined for some time, principally, it would appear, for an indiscretion on the part of his servants, who had come to Belfast to purchase wine for a "grand debauch," in which he was engaged at Castlereagh with his friends and retainers. A scuffle having taken place between the servants and some soldiers, in which there is no account; however, that Conn was actively concerned, he was taken prisoner, and lodged in Carrickfergus Castle. His confinement at first was very strict; but afterwards he was permitted to walk about the town, attended by a soldier, who delivered him to the Provost Marshal in the evening. In 1808 his liberation was accomplished in the following manner:—Thomas Montgomery, the master of a Scottish "trading barque," which supplied the garrison of Carrickfergus with meal, wooed and wedded Alice Dobbin, the daughter of the Provost Marshal, to whose charge the prisoner was committed. It is probable that the plan which followed from this connection had been previously concerted between the several parties; for by the assistance of some of them, and perhaps by the connivance of others, Conn was shortly after carried on board Montgomery's vessel, and conveyed to Scotland, after experiencing, doubtless, the many hair breadth escapes befitting so romantic an adventure.

Be that as it may, he was on his arrival in that kingdom taken under the protection of Hugh, or, as he was afterwards called, Sir Hugh Montgomery, the chief or laird of the person who had delivered him from captivity. Sir Hugh, however, had probably been at the bottom of the whole enterprize, and though he does not appear to have been of much consequence, he had sufficient interest to procure a pardon for Conn from the monarch who had just ascended the throne.

As the price of the deliverance and pardon which had been thus effected through the influence of Montgomery, O'Neil relinquished to him the half of his possessions. The account of the transaction, however, is very obscure and intricate. Various agreements seem to have taken place, all of which were ratified by the crown. The abstract of the entire business is, that Conn O'Neil granted the whole of his estates to Sir James Hamilton, who had also, it is probable, some share in procuring his enlargement. Of these estates Hamilton reconveyed, as had been previously settled, considerable portions to their former owner, and to Montgomery, his principal friend and deliverer.*

* This interesting account of Conn O'Neil is extracted from the MSS. of the Montgomery family, which contain much additional information on the subject. The following is the abridgment of the grant of Conn's possessions to Hamilton, as expressed in the Inquisition. "Then the King makes a grant to the said James Ha-

BUT Conn seems never to have flourished after this partition, but lost before his death, in different ways, partly indeed by sale, the remainder of his property. He appears to have retained possession, however, of the castle of his forefathers ; and reserved, when disposing of the land in which Knockcollumbkill was situated, the right of pa-

mlton of all the said lands, royalties, and appurtenances, (excepting all castles, lands, &c. belonging to the Bishop of Down and Connor, and all lands, &c. belonging to Abbies, &c. and the Fishery of the river Lagan, and excepting all castles, lands, &c. within the territory of the Lower Claneboys, then or lately in the possession of Sir Arthur Chichester and his assigns, &c.) to hold for ever at the rent of £100, as of the castle of Carrickfergus, in free and common socage, and not in capite; nor in socage in capite, nor by knight's service. But said James Hamilton to find Ten able horsemen, and Twenty footmen well armed, to attend for forty days on the Deputy at all Hostings in the province of Ulster. Then the King grants to the said James Hamilton a free market every Thursday at Castlereagh, and a fair in the same place on St. John Baptist's day, and two days after every year with courts of Pye Powder, and Tolls; and Courts Leet and Baron, within the manor of Castlereagh, &c. A free market at Bangor every Monday, and fair there on St. James the Apostle's day, and two days after. A market at Holywood every Wednesday, and a fair there every 24th of March, and two days after with Courts of Pye Powder and Tolls. A market at Gray Abby every Wednesday, and fair there on St. Luke's day and two days after with Courts of Pye Powder and Tolls. The King farther grants to the said James Hamilton power to alien to any English or Scotsman, or to the blood of the English or Scotch, and not to the meer Irish (Conn O'Neal Mac Brian Fertaugh O'Neal and his heirs only excepted). That he may likewise hold two Courts Leet for the Ards; and two for Upper Claneboys; and two Courts Baron in each of the said territories on Thursday every three weeks, for sums not exceeding 40 shillings, with all privileges. That he, his heirs, and all residents be free and exonerated from all Irish Cosses, Bonaght, Cosbery, and the like, and be also allowed free warren and free chase, &c. with liberty to import cattle and grain, and to export other goods, yarn only excepted, to any in amity with the King." &c. &c.

In the same grant, while describing the boundaries of Claneboys, there is the following passage :—" Towards the north and west part of said territory, the river Lagan, which runs immediately into the bay of Knockfergus, is the most known bounds of the said territory, and runs between the said territory and another parcel of territory or

tronage to that church. He died some time between 1612 and 1620; and in the year 1621, the Inquisition, when summing up the names and possessions of the proprietors among whom his estate was divided, informs us that Donell O'Neil, son and heir of the late Conn, was the owner of *two townlands*.

Of the residence of the O'Neils, so often mentioned in the foregoing account, there is scarcely at present one stone remaining on another. It was formerly called Castle Claneboye, but more frequently Castlereagh, or the King's Castle, and traditionally, by the British settlers, the Eagle's Nest, from its situation and the power of its owners. After the decease of Conn it was inhabited by Sir Moses Hill, but for what length of time has not been ascertained. It is described by Mr. Harris in 1744, as a large ruin, and built on a fort. Its final destruction only took place a few years ago, attended with a very ludicrous circumstance, which, I have

Account of
O'Neil's
Castle.

country called *Maloon la fall Felvagh*." This phrase means, *Falvey's half division of Malone: i. e. the scanty watered plain*.

In another part of the Inquisition it is said, that "Conn O'Neil executed an indenture of sale, by livery of seisin, unto Thomas Hibbotts, in 1608, of the townland of Ballynafegh in the *Gallagh*, lying between Castlereagh and the Lagan Water." The word *Gallagh* means *the pass of submission*, and at this place the O'Neils, it is probable, had often exacted homage from conquered enemies or inferior chiefs.

been credibly informed, is strictly true. The proprietor of the estate, wishing to preserve the ruined castle of so famous a sept, ordered a wall to be built round it for that purpose. The persons employed on this occasion, seeing no materials so conveniently situated as the stones of the old building itself, proceeded with great composure to demolish the ruin, and, unaccountable as it may seem, had accomplished their work, had pulled down the castle to build the wall, before the lamentable error was discovered. Its site, about two miles distant from Belfast, commands a most extended view of the Lough and the surrounding country ; but the present state of the place, as well as the history of the family, cannot but occasion some very singular reflections. It is curious to consider, that in so short a space, the castle in which O'Neil had so long dwelt, which had been looked upon with pride and confidence, should have utterly disappeared from the face of the earth ; that the fir tree should grow on the hearth stone at which he caroused with his trusty followers ; that the lands which were stocked with his friends and vassals, should now be inhabited by a race of people different in language, manners, customs, laws, name, and religion ; that the ground in which his bones, and the bones of his fathers rest, should be every year disturbed by the rough hand of the careless rustic ; and that his very tombstone should be the threshold of a

barn. Though two hundred years have rolled round since the deprivation and death of the subject of this article, there is reason to think that his lands were occupied by Scots and English, as they are at present, a century ago.

*Ecclesiastical State, &c. of the Parish of
Belfast.*

THE parish of Belfast is a vicarage, valued in the returns from the sees of Down and Connor, to his Majesty's Commissioners in 1633, at £50 per annum. We learn from the same authority, that the tithes and dues received by the vicar in 1710, amounted, *communibus annis*, to £180. The increase since these periods has been enormous, and, as an ecclesiastical benefice, this parish is at present extremely productive. The tithes are all compounded, and often at a very high rate. The Marquis of Donegall is the patron, whose ancestor, Sir Arthur Chichester, obtained it about 1612, in place of Island Magee, which he had surrendered to the crown. There is a glebe house in the town of Belfast, and a small, though from the quality of the land, a very valuable glebe, of about twenty acres, at Shankill, where the church originally stood.

Value of this
vicarage at
different
times, &c.

THERE is no regular account preserved of the incumbents of this parish, either in the First Fruits

Records, or elsewhere. From that, and various other authentic sources, however, the following list has been procured ; but it has been found impossible to ascertain, in all cases, the date of the induction of each minister.

Names, &c.
of the incumbents.

IN 1638, Simon Chichester was vicar.

IN 1666, Roger Jones was the incumbent.

IN 1696, Claudius Gilbert, F. T. C. D. was instituted and admitted to this vicarage.

His immediate successor was probably ——— Echlin, whose time of service has not been ascertained.

IN 1713, the Rev. William Tisdall, D. D. was vicar.

IN 1742, the Rev. Richard Stewart, D. D. was vicar.

REV. James Saurin* admitted 2d of June, 1747, to the vicarage of Belfast.

REV. William Bristow instituted 19th November, 1772, to the vicarage of Shankill or Belfast.

REV. Edward May instituted in 1809, to the vicarage of Shankill, alias Belfast.

REV. Arthur Chichester Macartney instituted in 1820, to the vicarage of Belfast.

* This gentleman was father of the late Attorney-General of Ireland.

THE oldest church document which has been discovered is a parish register of 1638, and several succeeding years, written on parchment. It contains nothing remarkable, though the lists of births, deaths, and marriages are extremely copious, with the names in general very different from those of the present inhabitants.

Church documents.

Agriculture.

As the manufactures of the parish have been already detailed, little now remains for investigation, except its agricultural state, which will require, on several accounts, to be treated with great brevity. The subject, indeed, it must be confessed, is both extensive and important, and no where more deserving of attention, as there are certainly few places in the kingdom where the extremes of good and bad cultivation are more observable. As the unimproved parts, however, are commonly situated on or near the mountains, the general appearance of the parish, as a flourishing agricultural district, is not much changed by their present state; and he who traverses it will readily admit, that agriculture, though very far from being advanced so much as it might, is in a more promising condition than in many other places; that with some it is highly improved, and that from such examples is fast approaching to a state of greater perfection.

Extremes of good and bad cultivation in this parish.

Course of
crops, &c.

Among the common farmers, the most general foundation of all their crops is potatoes. To this the greater part of their richest manure is applied, and it always precedes wheat when that grain is cultivated. This crop is principally confined to Malone.* The wheat is sometimes followed by barley; but the cultivation of this grain is extremely limited, nor is there at present any rye raised in the parish. The culture of oats is much more general than either of the preceding. It sometimes succeeds wheat, barley, or clover, but is more frequently sown on the potato ground, and often two or more years successively.

THE drill husbandry of potatoes is in general use among the best and most extensive farmers, though the old mode is still continued. Flax is commonly sown here after potatoes. There is no seed saved in this parish, and very little throughout the whole county.

Green crops.

THE most important of what are called green crops is clover, which is far from being so much

* The improvement in the quality of Irish wheat has been often noticed of late, and there is every probability that it will in some years rival the English. A remark of Rapin, in the Preface to his History of England, relative to this point, is somewhat curious. "Those who say," he informs us, "that Ireland will produce no wheat are partly mistaken; for though the statement is correct as to the north of that island, where the people are obliged to live entirely on oatmeal, yet wheat has been known to grow in the south."

cultivated as its produce and its quick sale in the Belfast market would appear to require. The predilection which custom has established in favour of pasture is too frequently deep rooted, though there are certainly many symptoms of improvement in this respect, in several parts of the parish. The cultivation of turnips is even less attended to than that of clover, being, with few exceptions, entirely raised for sale.

THE rich manures of Belfast are either used for the meadows in its vicinity, or drawn away by the farmers for their potatoes. To the facility, however, which is here afforded for procuring that most useful of all manures, lime,* must in a great degree be attributed the progress which has been made in agriculture. Lime, when judiciously employed, is found to be efficacious in most kinds of ground, but the strong clay soil which so much prevails in this parish is completely adapted to its use, which is accordingly in such places extensive and general. The erection of kilns by landlords, for the convenience of their tenants, would be found of mutual advantage. Only one instance of this kind has come under my observation here, by which the farmers were enabled to

Manures.

* Mr. Wakefield, however, in his Statistical and Political Account of Ireland, p. 124, has informed us, that Antrim is one of those counties in which limestone is unknown, an error so gross as to display a very partial acquaintance with this part of the country.

provide their lime at a far more moderate rate than in any other manner. Great quantities of bog also are consumed on the mountains, and the ashes used as manure. The mud and wrack from the sea are likewise applied to the same purpose ; but the latter is preferable and in more general demand.

Implements.

THERE are some thrashing machines in the parish, and the other implements of husbandry are not different from those used in other places.

It is proper to mention, in concluding this head, that though there are several of what are called " gentlemen farmers " in this parish, the number is not so great as might be desired and expected. As no prejudices, however, exist among them as to the infallibility of old customs, and as they enjoy the benefits of extensive capital, it will be found that the different improvements, both in the implements and modes of cultivation, generally originate in this quarter. The common farmers have not yet a proper notion of the advantages, in some cases, the necessity of green crops. That unprofitable and ruinous system of allowing ground to *recover* for three or four years, is far from being abandoned ; and though it is found that no land, however carefully managed, will bear for a continued number of seasons a perpetual succession of white crops, it is not the less true, that leaving it in wretched pasture is

a pernicious system. When it is intended that a course of barley, wheat, or oats shall be discontinued, clover and grass seed should be sown with the last crop. These will spring up the following year, and, so far from impoverishing the soil like the grain, they will improve and enrich it. When the ground has been long under culture, it is undoubtedly proper to introduce an intermixture of green crops, though there is perhaps not yet so great a necessity for such a measure in some parts of this kingdom as in England.

*Suggestions for Improvement and General
Observations.*

THOUGH this parish, from containing so large a town as Belfast, is not susceptible of many of those improvements which would be necessary in remote inland districts, yet still several alterations may be suggested that might materially amend its general appearance, as well as the prosperity of its inhabitants.

It must appear obvious that great advantages would accrue to the parish if very considerable tracts of ground, on the mountains, and in their neighbourhood, at present almost in a state of nature, were improved as far as they might. It cannot

Great advantages from a more general cultivation of the mountainous land.

but seem strange, that land, not more than four or five miles distant from the town of Belfast, and which in some places would seem to bear marks of former cultivation, should now be lying, in many instances, entirely neglected. This circumstance can scarcely arise from any known sterility in the soil ; for though its capability of profitable or speedy improvement has been matter of some doubt and speculation, there are certainly several parts of the mountains, particularly near the source of the Colin water, and in the levels between the Black mountain and Devis, that are not higher nor in any respect labouring under greater disadvantages than many places which have rewarded the toil of the husbandman with an abundant harvest. The soil is generally a deep turf bog, with a substratum of clay ; the whole improvements are confined to the cutting of deep drains ; and the greater part of the grass which springs up, is suffered to die and wither on the ground. But there are proofs that the introduction of alterations would be attended with complete success. The country around Hannahstown, on the lower part of the Black mountain, and in the neighbouring parish of Derriaghy, on the opposite side of Colin river, is in a state of rapid improvement. Local causes have given rise to this, but they prove, if proof were wanting, that the lower parts of Glen hill, Squire's hill, and several other places which are now of very little profit to their owners, would

also produce oats, potatoes, and clover, to the last of which the attention of improvers should be more particularly directed.

THE system of intermediate proprietors is also far from being unknown ; and its effects are often as injurious as in any other place. This, however, being an evil of a more general and important description, need not be particularly noticed.

IT would likewise be extremely advantageous, if a greater number of private roads were made in the mountainous parts of the parish. The facility of communication which might thus be afforded, would be found peculiarly beneficial to the agriculturists ; and as the number of such roads is certainly in some places on the increase, there can be no doubt but the fields adjoining them will soon display decisive marks of their utility.

Making of
Roads.

THERE is still greater scope for improvement in planting and fencing. In those parts of the mountains which are entirely incapable of being used in any other manner, some kinds of trees might certainly flourish. The banks of the numerous rivulets which the parish contains, should also participate in such benefits, which, besides beautifying the country, and sheltering the adjacent land, would one day be valuable property. The Forth and the

Planting and
fencing.

Milewater might then be as beautiful and picturesque as the Colln. Greater advantages would ensue from the more general use of enclosures. The white thorn may be seen, apparently however the remains of older bushes that have been destroyed, at a very considerable height up Squire's hill and the Black mountain. Sallow and ash are also occasionally found, equally elevated in situation ; and if there be any places in which none of these would thrive, the shrub elder might perhaps be substituted.

Embank-
ments.

THE capability of extending the embankments along this bay should also be included under the suggestions for improvement. The Lough of Belfast, at low water, has a very unpleasing appearance ; and from its extreme shallowness, for some distance near that town, resembles rather a great moor or fen than an arm of the sea. It is evident that a vast tract might be reclaimed here, particularly as a commencement has been made. Whether the experiment would be profitable or not, I am unable to judge ; but the vicinity of Belfast would certainly render such land, if properly managed, of great value.

General ob-
servations.

NOTWITHSTANDING these observations, which are merely submitted to the notice of persons more experienced in such matters, an attentive considera-

tion of the former and present state of the parish will afford abundant proofs of the ample progress which industry and civilization have made within the last half century. Many old inhabitants well remember when the greater part of that admired district along the shore was perfectly wild and uncultivated ; and when the roads, in general paved with great flat stones, were only broad enough for the easy journeying of a single horse and pack-saddle, the usual mode of conveyance some seventy or eighty years ago. They look almost with amazement on the accommodations and innovations which modern times have produced, and wonder how men lived in the days of their grandfathers. The houses in which their infancy was spent are become inconvenient or old fashioned ; the practices which their youth had considered as perfect will soon be neglected, or forgotten ; and when altogether divested of the freshness of present years, will be investigated like the customs of some rude and distant clime. Such will be the case too with a future generation ; new beauties, new improvements will arise, and a wiser race will discontinue or despise those systems and opinions, which our parish worthies, that now are, may deem consummate and unalterable.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

List of the Members of Parliament for the Borough of Belfast, from 1613 to the present time.

- 1613 Sir John Blennerhasset, Knight.
George Trevillian, Esq.
- 1639 Sir William Wray, Knight and Baronet.
George Rawdon, Esq.
- 1661 William Knight, Esq. in Legibus eruditus.
Henry Davys, Esq.
- 1695 Hon. Charles Chichester.
James Macartney, Esq.
- 1703 William Crafford, merchant.
William Cairnes, of Dublin, merchant.
- 1709 William Crafford, merchant.
Samuel Ogle, Esq. in place of W. Cairnes, deceased.
- 1713 Robert Moore, Esq.
Antony Atkinson, Esq.
- 1715 Hon. Capel Moore.
George Macartney, Esq.
- By another Indenture.*
- Hon. John Itchingham Chichester.
George Macartney, Esq.
- 1721 George Macartney, Esq.
George Macartney, junior, Esq. in place of the
Hon. J. L. Chichester, deceased.
- 1725 George Macartney, Esq.
Hon. John Chichester, in place of G. Macartney,
Esq. deceased.
- 1727 Hon. David John Barry.
George Macartney, Esq.

- 1745 George Macartney, Esq.
Hon. John Chichester.
- 1747 George Macartney, Esq.
William Macartney, Esq.
- 1757 William Macartney, Esq.
Hon. Arthur Barry, in the room of G. Macart-
ney, deceased.
- 1761 Hon. John Chichester
John Ludford, Esq.
- 1769 Hon. Henry Skeffington.
George Hamilton, Esq.
- 1776 Hon. Henry Skeffington.
Barry Yelverton, Esq.
- 1777 Hon. Henry Skeffington.
Alexander Crookshank, Esq. in the room of Barry
Yelverton, who made his election for the coun-
ty and town of Carrickfergus.
- 1784 Hon. Henry Skeffington.
Hon. Joseph Hewit.
- 1791 Hon. Henry Skeffington.
Sir William Godfrey.
- 1797 Right Hon. Lord Spencer Chichester.
George Crookshank, Esq.
- 1798 George Crookshank, Esq.
Alexander Hamilton, Esq.
- 1800 Edward May, Esq.
John Congreve, junior, Esq.
- 1801 Edward May, Esq.
- 1814 Sir Stephen May.
- 1818 Arthur Chichester, Esq.
- 1820 Earl of Belfast.

APPENDIX.

No. II.

List of the Sovereigns of Belfast, from 1613 to the present time.

| | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1613 Thomas Veasy | 1661 John Ridgley. |
| 1614 John Willoughby. | 1662 Same. |
| 1615 James Burr. | 1663 Captain George Macartney. |
| 1616 Same. | 1664 Same. |
| 1617 Carew Hart. | 1665 Thomas Warring. |
| 1618 Same. | 1666 Same. |
| 1619 George Theaker. | 1667 Edward Reynetts. |
| 1620 Same. | 1668 Captain G. Macartney. |
| 1621 | 1669 Same. |
| 1622 Edward Holmes. | 1670 William Warring. |
| 1623 Same. | 1671 Same. |
| 1624 | 1672 Thomas Walcott. |
| 1625 | 1673 George Macartney. |
| 1626 Edward Holmes. | 1674 Same. |
| 1627 Carew Hart. | 1675 Hugh Eccles. |
| 1628 Edward Holmes. | 1676 Capt. Geo. Macartney. |
| 1629 | 1677 Same. |
| 1630 Walter House Crymble. | 1678 Same. |
| 1631 Lewis Thompson. | 1679 Same. |
| 1632 Robert Foster. | 1680 Same. |
| 1633 Thomas Brunston. | 1681 Francis Thelford. |
| 1634 Lewis Thompson. | 1682 Lewis Thomson. |
| 1635 Henry Le Squire. | 1683 John Hamilton. |
| 1636 Same. | 1684 Same. |
| 1637 John Walker. | 1685 Thomas Knox. |
| 1638 John Leathes. | 1686 Captain Robert Leathes. |
| 1639 Henry Le Squire. | 1687 Same. |
| 1640 John Haddock. | 1688 Same. |
| 1641 Thomas Harrington. | 1689 Same. |
| 1642 Thomas Stevenson. | 1690 Same. |
| 1643 Thomas Theaker. | 1691 William Lockard. |
| 1644 Robert Foster. | 1692 James Macartney was Sovereign |
| 1645 William Leathes. | this year, but was removed, not |
| 1646 John Ash. | being qualified according to the |
| 1647 Hugh Donke. | statute. |
| 1648 Robert Foster. | 1693 William Crawford. |
| 1649 George Martin. | 1694 Same. |
| 1650 Thomas Harrington. | 1695 Capt. Edward Harrison. |
| 1651 Same. | 1696 Lewis Thomson. |
| 1652 Thomas Warring. | 1697 Earl of Donegall. |
| 1653 Same. | Robert Leathes, Deputy. |
| 1654 Thomas Theaker. | 1698 |
| 1655 John Leathes. | 1699 Capt. David Smith. |
| 1656 Thomas Warring. | 1700 Same. |
| 1657 William Leathes. | 1701 George Macartney. |
| 1658 Same. | 1702 John Chalmers. |
| 1659 Same. | 1703 David Buttle. |
| 1660 Francis Mocke. | |

- 1704 David Buttle. Resigned the rod not being qualified by the Test Act, when G. Macartney was chosen.
- 1705 George Macartney.
- 1706 Same.
- 1707 Same.
- 1708 Same.
- 1709 Richard Wilson.
- 1710 Roger Haddock.
- 1711 Same.
- 1712 Same.
- 1713 Hans Hamilton.
- 1714 James Gurnea.
- 1715 Same.
- 1716 Same.
- 1717 Henry Ellis.
- 1718 John Carpenter.
- 1719 Same.
- 1720 Henry Ellis.
- 1721 Robert Le Byrtt.
- 1722 Henry Ellis.
- 1723 In consequence of disputes between the Donegal Family and the Bypasses there was no Sovereign this year, but by mutual agreement G. Macartney, junior, served.
- 1724 Major Geo. Macartney: Died in office, when N. Byrtt was elected.
- 1725 Nathaniel Byrtt: Died in office, when James Macartney was chosen.
- 1726 James Macartney.
- 1727 John Chugstone.
- 1728 Same.
- 1729 Thomas Banks.
- 1730 John Duff.
- 1731 Arthur Byrtt.
- 1732 John Chugstone.
- 1733 Same.
- 1734 Robert Le Byrtt.
- 1735 Same.
- 1736 Margetson Saunders.
- 1737 Same.
- 1738 Same.
- 1739 Robert Le Byrtt.
- 1740 Same.
- 1741 John Duff.
- 1742 Same.
- 1743 Robert Le Byrtt.
- 1744 Arthur Byrtt.
- 1745 Same.
- 1746 Same.
- 1747 John Duff.
- 1748 Margetson Saunders.
- 1749 George Macartney.
- 1750 Same.
- 1751 Same.
- 1752 Arthur Byrtt.
- 1753 John Duff: died in office.
- 1754 Margetson Saunders.
- 1755 Stewart Banks.
- 1756 Same.
- 1757 Arthur Byrtt.
- 1758 Stewart Banks.
- 1759 George Macartney.
- 1760 Stephen Havon.
- 1761 James Hamilton.
- 1762 Stewart Banks.
- 1763 George Macartney.
- 1764 Same.
- 1765 Same.
- 1766 Stewart Banks.
- 1767 George Macartney.
- 1768 Same.
- 1769 James Hamilton.
- 1770 Stephen Havon.
- 1771 Stewart Banks.
- 1772 Shem Thompson.
- 1773 James Lewis.
- 1774 George Black.
- 1775 Same.
- 1776 Same.
- 1777 James Lewis.
- 1778 Stewart Banks.
- 1779 Samuel Black.
- 1780 Same.
- 1781 Same.
- 1782 George Black.
- 1783 Same.
- 1784 Samuel Black.
- 1785 George Black.
- 1786 Rev. William Bristow.
- 1787 Same.
- 1788 Same.
- 1789 Samuel Black.
- 1790 Rev. William Bristow.
- 1791 Same.
- 1792 Same.
- 1793 Same.
- 1794 Same.
- 1795 Same.
- 1796 Same.
- 1797 John Brown.
- 1798 Rev. Wm. Bristow.
- 1799 John Brown.
- 1800 Same.
- 1801 Same.
- 1802 Arthur Chichester.
- 1803 Edward May, M. P.
- 1804 Same.
- 1805 Same.
- 1806 Same.
- 1807 Rev. Edward May.
- 1808 Same.
- 1809 Edward May, M. P.
- 1810 Same.
- 1811 Rev. Edward May.
- 1812 Thomas Verner.
- 1813 Same.
- 1814 Same.
- 1815 Same.
- 1816 Rev. Edward May.
- 1817 Thos. Ludford Stewart.
- 1818 Same.
- 1819 Thomas Verner.
- 1820 Same.
- 1821 Same.
- 1822 Same.

APPENDIX.

No. III.

Amount of the Customs, Imports and Exports of Belfast.

| | |
|---|---|
| In 1800, the Customs of this Port amounted to £ 62,668 | In 1808, the Customs of this Port amounted to £318,121 |
| In 1801, 182,314 | In 1809, 425,174 |
| In 1802, 270,454 | In 1810, 321,325 |
| In 1803, 201,180 | In 1811, 344,449 |
| In 1805, 328,645 | In 1814, 373,721 |
| In 1806, 307,382 | In 1820, 306,263 |
| In 1807, 320,981 | In 1821, 386,709 |

THE following List has been procured from the printed weekly accounts of the Imports and Exports of Belfast. It will probably be found the annual average return of the last three years, having been collected indiscriminately from the Mercantile Journals of 1819, 1820 and 1821. Inquiry has been made as to the correctness of the returns of free goods, and as linen and provisions, the principal exports of Belfast, are of this description, some care has been taken to rectify any errors which might arise in consequence. It is impossible, however, to be strictly precise in matters of this kind; but the list is sufficiently particular to show the very great balance of trade which remains in favour of this town. Though the goods here enumerated are the principal articles of import and export, there is a vast variety of other merchandise of a more fluctuating or unimportant nature which has been necessarily omitted.

IMPORTS.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------|
| 5,983 Hbds. | } Sugar. |
| 307 Tierces | |
| 754 Barrels | |
| 9,639 Bales of Cotton Wool. | |
| 5,453 Ditto Alicant Barilla. | |
| 385 Tons Sicily ditto. | |
| 3,811 Casks of Pot and Pearl Ashes. | |
| 2,726 Ditto Tallow. | |
| 343 Hogheads of Tobacco. | |
| 8,850 Chests of Tea. | |

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 3,077 | Tons of Oak Bark. |
| 9,851 | Ditto Rock Salt. |
| 764,957 | Staves. |
| 489,316 | Deals and Deal Ends, Battens and Batten Ends. |
| 15,625 | Pieces of American Timber. |
| 1,803 | Barrels of Rosin. |
| 1,157 | Ditto Tar. |
| 8,684 | Hogheads (from 5th July, 1821, to 5th July, 1822) of Flaxseed. |
| 74,850 | Tons of Coals. |
| 1,460 | Ditto Bar and Bolt |
| 563 | Ditto Pig |
| 18,005 | Bundles of Nail Rod |
| 7,822 | Bundles of Hoop |
| 755 | Kags |
| 1,585 | Bags |
| 2,251 | Bundles of Spanish Cane Reeds. |
| 3,445,310 | Slates. |
| 145 | Tons |
| 11,656 | Cantars |
| 489 | Crates, Hhds. &c. of Hardware. |
| 1,649 | Ditto Earthenware. |
| 1,965 | Skips, Bales, &c. of Cotton Yarn. |
| 123 | Puncheons of Rum. |
| 326 | Pipes of Spanish Red Wine. |
| 123 | Ditto Port Wine. |
| 118 | Ditto Cape Madeira Wine. |

EXPORTS.

| | |
|------------|--------------------------------|
| 17,566,000 | Yards of Linen Cloth. |
| 26,752 | Bales |
| 2,186 | Hhds. |
| 22,488 | Barrels of Pork. |
| 5,058 | Tierces, &c. of Beef and Pork. |
| 2,942 | Barrels, &c. of Beef. |
| 76,154 | Firkins of Butter. |
| 4,614 | Casks of Lard. |
| 3,455 | Tons of Salt. |
| 1,566 | Bales of Flax. |
| 5,585 | Boxes of Soap. |
| 3,812 | Ditto Candles. |
| 4,855 | Hides. |
| 1,165 | Dosen Calf Skins. |
| 2,996 | Tons Wheat. |
| 283 | Ditto Oats. |
| 137,291 | Yards of Muslin. |
| 350 | Bales of Paper. |
| 133 | Casks of Starch. |
| 116 | Ditto of Vegetable Gum. |

APPENDIX.

No. IV.

Population of Belfast.

SOUTH DISTRICT.

| | Houses. | Male. | Fem. | | Houses. | Male. | Fem. |
|-----------------------|---------|-------|------|-----------------------|---------|-------|------|
| Castle Street | 60 | 148 | 194 | Hammond's Court... | 6 | 22 | 26 |
| High Street | 98 | 312 | 359 | Castle Place | 4 | 13 | 11 |
| Hanover Quay and | | | | Calendar Street | 8 | 6 | 6 |
| King Street | 18 | 39 | 42 | Donegall Place ... | 23 | 96 | 165 |
| Marlborough Street | 9 | 42 | 48 | Fountain Lane ... | 1 | 6 | 4 |
| Princes Street ... | 37 | 140 | 180 | Fountain Street ... | 12 | 37 | 28 |
| Back Lane & Prin- | | | | South Mews | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| ces court | 27 | 76 | 66 | Queen Street | 9 | 24 | 20 |
| Weigh House Lane | 35 | 88 | 103 | Jacobson's Court ... | 6 | 11 | 9 |
| Forest Lane | 49 | 148 | 116 | Water Street | 2 | 9 | 4 |
| Lower Church Lane | 41 | 116 | 130 | King Street | 29 | 75 | 101 |
| Cole's Alley | 19 | 53 | 47 | Magee's Entry | 21 | 21 | 27 |
| Porter's Court and | | | | Cunningham's Court | 34 | 72 | 68 |
| Hamilton's Court | 5 | 13 | 23 | M'Kinstry's Entry | 16 | 45 | 52 |
| Pottingers Entry | 34 | 91 | 100 | Lettice Lane | 59 | 163 | 170 |
| Joy's Entry | 17 | 55 | 45 | Hall's Court | 9 | 17 | 14 |
| Joy's Court | 2 | 3 | 9 | Donaldson's Entry | 5 | 17 | 9 |
| Wilson's Entry | 22 | 71 | 73 | Diet's Entry | 4 | 8 | 12 |
| Crown Entry..... | 14 | 28 | 42 | Barrack Street | 78 | 309 | 332 |
| Quin's Entry | 2 | 4 | 7 | Kennedy's Entry ... | 5 | 13 | 20 |
| Anne Street | 104 | 272 | 354 | Hamilton Court..... | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Corn market..... | 26 | 70 | 63 | Murphy's Row | 6 | 10 | 7 |
| M'Cutcheon's Entry | 8 | 15 | 16 | Pound Street | 26 | 79 | 80 |
| Donaldson's Entry | 14 | 32 | 41 | Orange Row | 19 | 32 | 33 |
| Upper Church Lane | 12 | 20 | 39 | College Square North | 7 | 30 | 33 |
| Telfair's Entry | 18 | 54 | 50 | Academ. Institution | | 83 | 20 |
| Cooney's Court ... | 18 | 39 | 42 | College Square South | 2 | 7 | 9 |
| William Street South | 18 | 47 | 70 | House of Correction | | 27 | 18 |
| George's Lane | 4 | 21 | 20 | Wellington Place ... | 8 | 40 | 66 |
| Thomas's Court..... | 11 | 41 | 31 | Donegall Square | | | |
| Poultry Square | 10 | 33 | 32 | North | 9 | 21 | 48 |
| Arthur Street..... | 24 | 54 | 113 | Ditto East | 8 | 24 | 46 |
| Castle Lane | 14 | 33 | 40 | Ditto South | 9 | 15 | 24 |

| Houses. Male. Fem. | | | Houses. Male. Fem. | | |
|-----------------------|----|----|--------------------|------------------------|-------------|
| Ditto West..... | 1 | 4 | 6 | Macaulay's Lane ... | 5 26 19 |
| Wellington Lane ... | 5 | 9 | 18 | Bamber Square | 4 12 7 |
| Chichester Street ... | 22 | 56 | 100 | Market Lane | 20 70 104 |
| Upper Arthur Street | 15 | 29 | 54 | Market Street..... | 26 73 104 |
| Montgomery Street | 2 | 5 | 8 | Mary Street South... | 5 3 8 |
| Great Edward Street | 9 | 23 | 30 | Scott's Row | 8 9 17 |
| Cromack Street | 54 | 59 | 67 | Henrietta Street. | 4 5 7 |
| Upper Chichester | | | | Hamilton Place..... | 4 8 10 |
| Street | 5 | 3 | 4 | Grace Street..... | 19 14 68 |
| Arrott's Lane..... | 9 | 32 | 25 | Russell Street | 2 5 7 |
| Cromack Lane | 2 | 10 | 9 | Suburbs | 167 430 475 |
| May Street..... | 7 | 30 | 19 | | |
| Total Houses.....2574 | | | Males.....4401 | | |
| | | | Females.....5118 | | |

NORTH-EAST DISTRICT.

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|----|-----|-----|-----------------------|----|-----|-----|
| Bridge Street | 19 | 49 | 56 | Patterson's Row ... | 14 | 32 | 42 |
| Waring Street | 50 | 157 | 160 | Little York Street... | 20 | 62 | 73 |
| Lime Kiln Dock and | | | | Green Street | 65 | 170 | 185 |
| Store Lane..... | 11 | 33 | 33 | Houses off ditto..... | 6 | 7 | 16 |
| Chester Lane | 21 | 74 | 74 | William's Lane | 15 | 48 | 51 |
| Donaldson's Entry ... | 5 | 10 | 6 | Kennedy's Row and | | | |
| Quay Lane | 18 | 45 | 51 | Houses adjoining | 16 | 62 | 61 |
| Blue Bell Entry and | | | | M'Meehan's Entry or | | | |
| Elbow Lane | 27 | 69 | 81 | John's Court | 12 | 38 | 28 |
| Mitchell's Entry ... | 9 | 28 | 33 | Miller's Entry | 3 | 15 | 12 |
| Skipper Street and | | | | Crawford's Row..... | 10 | 42 | 45 |
| Sugar House Entry | 23 | 56 | 86 | Trafalgar Street..... | 17 | 19 | 45 |
| Bank Lane | 54 | 93 | 102 | Houses off ditto ... | 6 | 15 | 16 |
| Hill Street | 27 | 89 | 89 | Nile Street..... | 6 | 11 | 19 |
| Commercial Court & | | | | Houses off ditto..... | 6 | 11 | 14 |
| Elliot Court | 51 | 35 | 35 | Boyd's Court..... | 6 | 18 | 15 |
| Cotton Court..... | 6 | 11 | 9 | Ellen's Court..... | 7 | 18 | 25 |
| Mary Street | 19 | 61 | 53 | Gordon Street | 48 | 111 | 128 |
| Tomb Street | 20 | 55 | 61 | Grattan Street and | | | |
| Bradford Square.. | 18 | 43 | 36 | Houses in the rear | 92 | 234 | 254 |
| Tomb's Quay..... | 3 | 16 | 15 | Mooney's Entry..... | 14 | 18 | 39 |
| Corporation Ground | 5 | 11 | 7 | Nelson Street..... | 53 | 116 | 162 |
| Little Patrick Street | 3 | 8 | 10 | Talbot Street and | | | |
| James's Street | 38 | 91 | 98 | Houses in the rear | 58 | 158 | 226 |
| Blakely's Row..... | 13 | 30 | 41 | Johnny's Entry | 9 | 21 | 27 |
| Corporation Street... | 4 | 5 | 15 | Morrow's Entry ... | 17 | 52 | 65 |
| Henry Street | 3 | 6 | 13 | Upper Green Street | 9 | 39 | 38 |
| Corbitt's Row | 5 | 17 | 16 | Brady's Row | 12 | 34 | 34 |
| Little Patrick Street | 69 | 206 | 248 | Robert Street..... | 26 | 88 | 80 |
| Entry off ditto | 5 | 11 | 14 | Edward Street | 46 | 153 | 162 |
| Patrick Street..... | 54 | 190 | 161 | Little ditto..... | 5 | 17 | 26 |
| Entry off ditto | 5 | 12 | 16 | Henry's Square ... | 12 | 25 | 28 |
| Graham's Row | 10 | 35 | 40 | Academy Street..... | 49 | 128 | 161 |
| Patrick's Lane | 9 | 25 | 33 | Rear of ditto | 11 | 27 | 30 |
| Covent Garden | 5 | 9 | 13 | James's Place..... | 5 | 7 | 13 |
| Tennant's Court..... | 3 | 11 | 9 | Brown's Row..... | 6 | 18 | 23 |

| Houses. | Male. | Fem. | Houses. | Male. | Fem. |
|-------------------------|-------|------|----------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Curteis Street..... | 15 | 29 | 50 | Thomas's Lane & Crt | 11 24 28 |
| Rear of ditto | 7 | 25 | 17 | Thomas's Street..... | 12 14 26 |
| Bairn's Court..... | 4 | 21 | 17 | Union Place | 13 22 34 |
| Clarke's Lane and | | | | King's Court and | |
| houses in the rear | 15 | 67 | 67 | houses adjoining | 15 30 37 |
| Corr's Lane | 17 | 30 | 44 | George's Street | 10 21 32 |
| Caxton Street..... | 44 | 142 | 148 | Carrickfergus Street | |
| Academy Court | 6 | 13 | 16 | and Houses in the | |
| York Street | 21 | 35 | 60 | rear of it..... | 72 245 269 |
| William's Row | 16 | 52 | 64 | Chichester Quay ... | 6 7 18 |
| Rear of ditto | 5 | 21 | 15 | Fever Hospital and | |
| George's Court | 5 | 26 | 31 | Dispensary | 27 32 |
| York Lane | 12 | 27 | 23 | Poor House and In- | |
| Frederick Street ... | 18 | 29 | 45 | firmary | 165 182 |
| Lancaster Street, ditto | | | | Infantry Barrack ... | 342 116 |
| Lane and houses | | | | Artillery ditto..... | 13 3 |
| adjoining..... | 82 | 157 | 212 | Suburbs | 199 599 497 |
| Total Houses..... | 1779 | — | Males.....5286 | — | Females.....5936 |

NORTH-WEST DISTRICT.

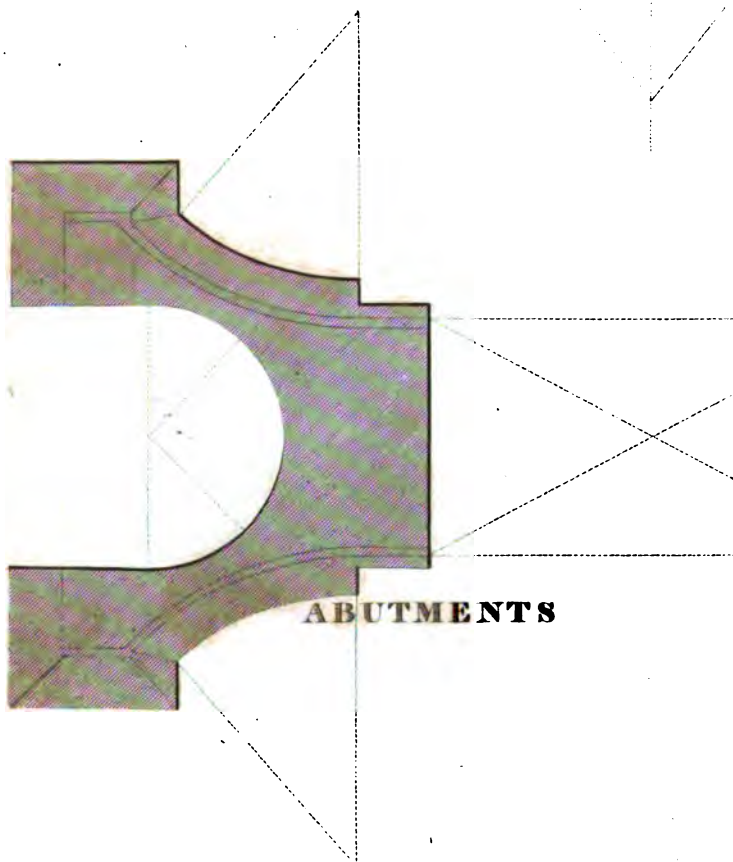
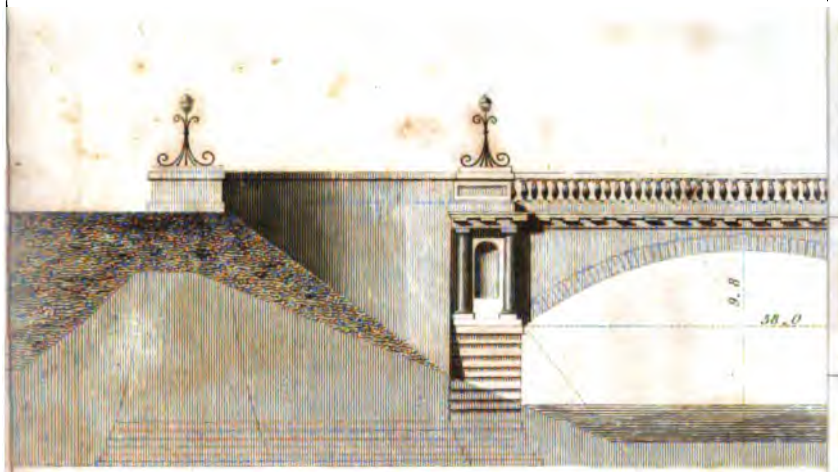
| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----------------------|-------------|
| Dontgall Street..... | 26 | 225 | 523 | Snugborough Entry | 5 11 12 |
| Little ditto..... | 65 | 210 | 245 | Stormont's ditto .. | 9 16 16 |
| Thomson Court..... | 10 | 16 | 14 | Suffern's ditto..... | 7 17 25 |
| Church Street..... | 13 | 30 | 54 | Round ditto | 20 60 73 |
| John Street..... | 55 | 144 | 159 | Keenan's Row | 7 10 10 |
| Union Street | 61 | 193 | 240 | Wilson's Row | 8 21 57 |
| Berryhill's Court ... | 4 | 8 | 11 | Graham's Entry..... | 24 68 69 |
| Birch Lane | 18 | 36 | 53 | Orr's Entry | 10 16 52 |
| Stephen's Row | 7 | 33 | 33 | Wine Cellar ditto .. | 8 17 13 |
| Charles Street..... | 29 | 99 | 128 | Castle Court | 6 20 29 |
| Mustard Street | 84 | 288 | 328 | Caddell's Entry | 28 91 79 |
| William Street | 42 | 121 | 151 | Legg's Lane | 9 13 16 |
| Long Lane..... | 13 | 43 | 46 | Rosemary Street..... | 45 72 102 |
| Margaret Street..... | 48 | 142 | 176 | Hercules Street..... | 103 266 292 |
| Carrick Hill Street | 172 | 507 | 526 | Fulton's Entry | 7 16 17 |
| Drummond's Court | 22 | 73 | 75 | Kennedy's Entry, | |
| Taylor's Row..... | 10 | 31 | 35 | No. 1 | 15 43 44 |
| M'Adam's Court ... | 10 | 26 | 33 | Ditto, No. 2 | 14 59 47 |
| Lodge Lane | 54 | 145 | 143 | Bell's Row..... | 23 76 80 |
| Peter's Hill | 106 | 267 | 246 | Charlemont Row ... | 30 105 119 |
| Brown Square West | 57 | 183 | 166 | New Row | 17 36 43 |
| Ditto South | 51 | 172 | 205 | Black's Court..... | 63 125 170 |
| Gardener Street..... | 45 | 141 | 143 | Forcade' Entry | 25 58 66 |
| Mitchell's Row | 35 | 122 | 129 | Hudson's ditto | 55 168 161 |
| North Street | 183 | 501 | 538 | Berry Street | 45 105 137 |
| Law's Court | 7 | 13 | 23 | Chapel Lane | 24 64 44 |
| Mattear's Court..... | 12 | 28 | 50 | Mill Street | 63 142 201 |
| Allen's Entry | 6 | 7 | 19 | Marquis Street | 32 107 144 |
| Wright's ditto | 5 | 10 | 9 | West Street | 32 125 152 |
| M'Crea's ditto ... | 7 | 11 | 12 | Smithfield Square ... | 56 172 182 |
| Rice's Entry | 5 | 12 | 16 | Dalton's Entry | 8 17 20 |

| | Houses. Males. Fem. | | | | Houses. Males. Fem. | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------------|---------------------|-----|-----|
| Francis Street | 22 | 54 | 72 | M'Master's Court... | 10 | 11 | 19 |
| Wine Tavern Street | 49 | 176 | 196 | Sweep's Entry | 10 | 16 | 14 |
| Ditto Court | 9 | 24 | 24 | Magee's ditto | 7 | 21 | 27 |
| Samuel Street | 31 | 123 | 116 | Ferguson's Court ... | 9 | 16 | 22 |
| Law's Entry | 32 | 46 | 71 | Mill Dam Side | 16 | 31 | 37 |
| Gregg's Row | 39 | 121 | 140 | Halfpenny's Entry... | 14 | 32 | 47 |
| Millfield Street | 167 | 449 | 508 | Alexander's Row ... | 7 | 27 | 32 |
| Hunter's Court | 5 | 13 | 15 | Boomer's Place ... | 13 | 47 | 66 |
| Tate's Court | 7 | 20 | 23 | Suburbs | 169 | 453 | 484 |
| Tanner's ditto | 14 | 39 | 37 | | | | |
| Total Houses | 2746 | Males.....7667 | Females.....8714 | | | | |

GRAND TOTAL:

Houses.....7099—Males.....17,354—Females.....10,763
Total Males and Females, 37,117.

It will be seen by the preceding correct census of Belfast, which was taken this year, that the population of the town may now be reckoned at least forty thousand, Ballymacarrett, generally supposed indeed to be more than equivalent to the difference, not being included in the foregoing table. It will likewise be perceived, that from names having been lately given to some small rows or lanes, the number of streets, entries, lanes, quays, &c. appears considerably greater than that which has been mentioned in the text, but the quantity there fixed on, viz. 150, nearly includes all of any consequence or importance.



APPENDIX.

No. V.

Account of the proposed Bridge to connect the Counties of Down and Antrim, at Belfast.

SINCE the preceding pages were sent to press, a drawing of the proposed New Bridge to cross the Lagan at Belfast has been procured; the plan and estimate of which are the production of that experienced engineer, DAVID LOGAN, Esq. who is at present employed in conducting the Government works at Donaghadee Harbour. For the gratification of the public, it has been thought suitable and necessary to give a correct representation and a brief account of the intended Bridge, with such other information as may shew the state in which the matter at present rests.

It is proposed (as will be perceived by referring to the plate) that the Bridge shall consist of five arches of cut stone, each 58 feet span and 9 feet 8 inches above high water mark; the piers to be 9 feet 8 inches each; the abutments and wing walls 90 feet; making, together, 418 feet 8 inches in length; the width at the entrance to be 60 feet, and within the walls 30 feet, allowing five feet on each side for flagged footways. An ornamental plan of these dimensions, estimated at £26,000, or, if plain, to cost £23,000, was submitted to the County of Antrim Grand Jury at the last Summer Assizes, who entirely approved of the former (that which is here engraved), on the principle of establishing tolls to defray the expense of it. They accordingly appointed a deputation to wait on the Gentlemen of the Down Grand Jury, to procure their concurrence and assistance, and to furnish any other explanations which might be required. But the latter, having it in contemplation to expend a very large sum (about £60,000) in the erection of a new gaol, rather declined to lay, at present, any additional burthen on their county. As several of them also objected to the mode of fixing a toll on the Bridge, even for a limited time, it was satisfactorily shewn, that a trifling rate (less than that of the turnpikes in the neighbourhood of Belfast) on carriages, carts, and horses, would, in a very few years, defray the entire cost of the proposed structure; or if the Gentlemen of Down shall finally determine against raising the expense of build-

ing the Bridge by a toll, they can levy it in the ordinary way, by an acreable assessment, which, it is well known, would not add one halfpenny an acre to the common rates of the Counties, and that only for a few years, the gross sum being procured from the Counties in the first instance.

THERE is no doubt, therefore, that the increasing necessity of the measure, the approval and recommendation of this plan, by so intelligent a body as the County of Antrim Grand Jury, and the judicious method which is suggested of meeting the expense, will have a serious and speedy influence in removing any prejudices or obstacles that may remain, among the inhabitants of the County of Down. The utmost satisfaction also must be evinced at the judgment and propriety that have been displayed in selecting the site, which has been fixed on, about 220 yards to the south of the old Long Bridge, opening into Chichester Street, Donegall Square and Wellington Place, all of which form one continued street, eighty feet in breadth, terminated by the College, having nine avenues leading to different parts of the body of the town, exclusively of several others to the southward, and capable of affording, therefore, to the greatest crowds, the utmost safety and the most complete accommodation. It must be acknowledged that the present line of approach has none of these advantages, but, on the contrary, that the direct, and almost the only entrance from it, is one of the oldest and narrowest streets in the town, so that if it should be continued, either by building a new Bridge in the same situation, or altering the old, the inconvenience and danger so often complained of and so often experienced, will not be in the least diminished, as it would probably be altogether impracticable to increase the breadth of the street alluded to, or those which lead from it.

ERRATA.

| | |
|--|---|
| In p. 13, l. 19, for "where" read "were." | Quay" read "Custom House Quay." |
| In p. 60, l. 15, for "purposes" read "purposes." | In p. 103, l. 16, for "Blackstaff" read "Blackstaff." |
| In p. 94, l. 4, and side note, for "Hanover | In p. 104, l. 9, for "salts" read "salts." |

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